THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

W. B. YEATS'S USE OF THE BALLAD FORM

by

SHANNON O'BYRNE

(C)

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1984

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR: Shannon O'Byrne

TITLE OF THESIS: W. B. Yeats's Use of the Ballad Form

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED: M.A.

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED: 1984

Permission is hereby granted to THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

(Signed) S. K. O'Byrne

PERMANENT ADDRESS:

#4 - 9804 - 112 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 1L4

DATED Sept. 12/84

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "W. B. Yeats's Use of the Ballad Form" submitted by Shannon O'Byrne in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Shirley A. Neuman
Supervisor

Date Sept. 10, 1984

For my husband, James McGinnis

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to show that the subject and style of Yeats's ballads undergo fundamental changes all of which use the intensity of the traditional ballad form. As Yeats writes: "we artists . . . are the servants not of any cause but of mere naked life, and above all of that life in its nobler forms, where joy and sorrow are one, Artificers of the Great Moment" (EI, 260).

In Yeats's earliest ballads, discussed in Chapter One, he draws upon the elemental emotional appeal of the folk ballad through the conventions of its traditional use. Ballads written in this period, such as "Down by the Salley Gardens," "The Stolen Child," and "The Ballad of Moll Magee," are simple, concise, intellectually unassuming, and generally consistent with the traditional ballad form. Yeats's later experimentation with the ballad takes a dramatically new tack, described in Chapter Two as being directed by the philosophy of *A Vision*. Yeats breaks sharply with ballad convention, no longer focusing on the narration of a centralized event but on the poetic revelation of mystical ideas. The simple ballad-like theme of "The Three Bushes," for example, is transformed into a poem of philosophical challenge by the series of esoteric poems which follow it. Similarly, a profound complexity of thought and expression characterize the "Crazy Jane" poems which resemble the traditional ballad only in certain structural qualities. Yeats's last ballad-like poems, discussed in Chapter Three, are of four main types. First, ballads like "Long-legged Fly" continue Yeats's objective

of revealing the powerful ideas of *A Vision*, though in a manner more accessible than that of the "Crazy Jane" series. Second, thematically hybrid poems like "Three Marching Songs" unite philosophical themes to political ones. Third, Yeats composes ballads in which Irish politics alone constitute his subject as in "Come Gather round Me Parnellites." And finally, ballads like "Colonel Martin" show Yeats capturing an emotional intensity different from that of his earliest ballads though within the same traditional context. Regardless of their focus, however, Yeats's last ballads reflect his increasing commitment to write for a larger audience than the narrative and thematic complexity of the "Crazy Jane" series would admit; in his last works, Yeats uses the ballad as a means through which to speak to the "indomitable Irishry" (VP, 640).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgement is gratefully made:

To Dr. Shirley Neuman, for encouragement and guidance throughout the preparation of this thesis.

To James McGinnis and Joyce O'Byrne, for their interest and assistance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	THE EARLY BALLADS	1
II.	THE EFFECT OF *A VISION* ON YEATS'S BALLADS	19
III.	SOME LATER BALLADS	56
	NOTES	91
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	97

ABBREVIATIONS OF WORKS ON THE BALLAD AND BY YEATS CITED

A:	Yeats, *Autobiographies*
B:	Gerould, *The Ballad of Tradition*
C:	Jeffares, *A Commentary on the Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*
EI:	Yeats, *Essays and Introductions*
Ex:	Yeats, *Explorations*
JS & D:	Yeats, *John Sherman & Dhoya*. Ed., Richard J. Finneran.
L:	Yeats, *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*. Ed., Allan Wade.
L-DW:	Yeats, *Letters on Poetry from W. B. Yeats to Dorothy Wellesley*. Ed., Dorothy Wellesley.
M:	Yeats, *Mythologies*
S:	Zimmermann, *Songs of Irish Rebellion: Political Street Ballads and Rebel Songs*
TL:	Yeats, *Tables of the Law*
UP,I:	Yeats, *Uncollected Prose*, vol. 1. Ed., John P. Frayne.
VP1:	Yeats, *The Variorum Edition of the Plays of W. B. Yeats*. Ed., Russell K. Alspach.
VP:	Yeats, *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*. Eds., Peter Allt and Russell K. Alspach.
V:	Yeats, *A Vision*

CHAPTER ONE

THE EARLY BALLADS

Throughout his life William Butler Yeats revered Red Hanrahan, the Celtic bard of his own creation[1] whose mysterious powers and sorrowful understanding of Ireland Yeats acclaims in the third section of *Mythologies*. Red Hanrahan, "the learned man and the great songmaker" (M, 216), unites all Yeats's impulses and ambitions: his patriotism, his eccentricity, his hope of becoming a great poet, his dream of apprehending a supernatural wisdom. Perhaps most important to Yeats is that Red Hanrahan's art deeply moves his audience. Twice in *Stories of Red Hanrahan* the listeners weep when the great bard sings, the first time during Hanrahan's song to Oona, the second when Hanrahan nears the end of a ballad sung for Ireland. Yeats describes the latter incident in this way:

> While he was singing, his voice began to break, and tears came rolling down his cheeks, and Margaret Rooney put down her face into her hands and began to cry along with him. Then a blind beggar by the fire shook his rags with a sob, and after that there was no one of them all but cried tears down. (M, 237)

Yeats first became conscious of the ballad's mysterious, emotive power when, as a member of the Young Ireland Society, he was moved by badly written verse because it contained "the actual thoughts of a man at a passionate moment of life" (A, 102). He sought to capture the strength latent in the simple intensity and "gutsy energy" (EI, 4-5) of a traditional ballad, believing as he did that

> the bardic class . . . sing of the universal emotions, our loves and angers, our delight in stories and heroes, our delight in things beautiful and gallant. They do not write

> for a clique, or leave after them a school, for they sing for all men. (UP,I, 105)

And so, filled with the desire of "making a whole literature" (EI, 4), Yeats began to search for a "style and things to write about that the ballad-writers might be the better" (EI, 4).

Though as early as 1901 Yeats describes this ambition as an illusion (EI, 4), his veneration of the prototypic bard Hanrahan does not falter. Indeed, when Yeats at sixty-one asks in a poem "What shall I do with this absurdity--/ O heart, O troubled heart--this caricature,/ Decrepit age that has been tied to me/ As to a dog's tail?" (VP, 409), it is Red Hanrahan, and "all his mighty memories" (VP, 413), to whom Yeats finally appeals for strength. Nor does Yeats's belief in the ballad as a critical form of expression weaken; it is Red Hanrahan's art-form, the ballad, which Yeats spends much of his life forming and reshaping.

* * *

Yeats's earliest ballads imitate the traditional. In seeking to capture the emotive intensity contained within the simple verse of the oral ballad, Yeats minimizes any intrusion of the literary and sophisticated. "Down by the Salley Gardens" (first published 1889; VP, 90), for example, is consistently within convention and fits neatly within G. H. Gerould's definition of the ballad:

> A ballad is a folk-song that tells a story with stress on the crucial situation, tells it by letting the action unfold itself in event and speech, and tells it objectively with little comment or intrusion of personal bias. (B, 11)

While emotion can be displayed by those who are part of narrative action, the ballad itself is usually characterized by a tone of impersonality; it

focuses on a "compressed and centralized episode" (B, 10), and relates this episode dramatically and simply (B, 10-11). The ballad story is its own *raison d'être*.

All these characteristics are present in "Down by the Salley Gardens." Its theme, the loss of love, as well as its brevity and simplicity of language, is common to the traditional ballad. Even the imagery is characteristically conventional, relying on ballad commonplaces like "snow-white hand" or "little snow-white feet." Clichéed images such as these achieve "a kind of permanence"[2] because they function as signs and are closely connected to the traditional ballad narrative in which characterization and setting have little prominence. In short, narrative event, not authorial originality, is the critical feature of the ballad.

Yeats's stylized language in "Down by the Salley Gardens," coupled with a conscious lack of detail concerning time and place, helps create a ballad pathos which, consistent with custom, maintains "a complete lack of protest or of sentimentality."[3] Yeats enforces the ballad's conventional distance between speaker and audience through factual language the very brevity of which precludes a description of the narrator's presumed heartache over a broken romance. Yeats further controls the sentimentality, which is latent in the love-lost theme but nonetheless an inappropriate ballad focus, through the use of montage or narrative flashes. Hence, the reader does not learn of the events leading up to the narrator's walk with his love in the garden, nor is the reader presented with a mawkish description of his disappointment when their romance ends. Rather, Yeats provides two short stanzas through which the ballad's central episode is relayed. And it is only a modulation in the

last line of the first stanza from "But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree," to "But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears" (VP, 90) in the last line of the poem, which signals the narrator's despair.

"Down by the Salley Gardens" is certainly a more traditional ballad than Yeats suggests in his footnote to the poem:

> This [the poem] is an attempt to reconstruct an old song from three lines imperfectly remembered by an old peasant woman in the village of Ballysodare, Sligo, who often sings them to herself. (VP, 90)

But as his son Michael Yeats points out,

> the old peasant woman of Ballysodare must have remembered far more than three lines of this old folk song; for if a comparison is made it shows that Yeats's poem follows closely the wording of the folk original.[4]

Indeed, while Yeats may have been influenced by other sources,[5] the ballad conventions of "Down by the Salley Gardens" seem directly derived from the following folk song:

> Down by the Sally Gardens my own true love and I did meet
> She passed the Sally Gardens, a tripping with her snow white feet.
> She bid me take life easy just as the leaves fall from each tree;
> But I being young and foolish with my true love would not agree.
>
> In a field beside the river my lovely girl and I did stand.
> And leaning on her shoulder I pressed her burning hand.
> She bid me take life easy, just as the stream flows o'er the weirs
> But I being young and foolish I parted her that days [sic] in tears.
>
> I wish I was in Banagher and my fine girl upon my knee.
> And I with money plenty to keep her in good company.
> I'd call for liquor of the best with flowing bowls on every side.
> Kind fortune ne'er shall daunt me, I am young and the world's wide.[6]

In his version, Yeats improves metre by shortening the lines and establishing a uniformity in rhythmic patterns. He prevents metre from jarring with meaning by replacing the harsh double stress on the words

"true love" in the original with "Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet" (VP, 90). And while Yeats's stanzas comprised of four hexameter lines rhyming in couplets do not constitute a strictly formal ballad quatrain,[7] the prosody has at least four predecessors in Child's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*,[8] according to Gerould.

Yeats makes other formal changes to this folk song. Punctuation is added in the first and seventh lines to mark appropriate pauses. Repetition of the phrase "my love" in the first line of the second stanza, in place of "my lovely girl," provides an effective link to the first stanza, as does repetition of the adjective "snow-white." It is also notable that Yeats does not include in his version the third stanza of the original. By excluding this stanza, Yeats sharpens the centralized episode and heightens the emotionally arresting impact of his ballad's last two lines. Ballad drama is also augmented; Yeats is able to pull more tightly the narrative tensions between the contrasting narrative situations of the two stanzas. In short, Yeats gives a polish to the formal elements of a folk song and so strengthens its emotional impact.

Another of Yeats's ballads which has a traditional source is "The Stolen Child" (first published 1886; VP, 86), a poem about a young boy who is glamoured by Celtic fairies. As Gerould shows, themes inspired by superstition are common to the conventional ballad (B, 61-65). Perhaps "The Stolen Child" is even patterned after the ancient ballad form which grew out of the Lais.[9] At the very least, it is clear that Yeats's ballad echoes the folk superstition that should anyone fall asleep at a certain rocky point at Rosses, "there is danger of their waking silly, the fairies having carried off their souls."[10]

The subject matter of "The Stolen Child" is grounded in Celtic

folklore and ancient belief. Each stanza reveals the mischievous, mysterious, and even malevolent actions of the fairies which the Irish peasantry historically have feared. Hence, that the fairies successfully glamour the young boy in the poem is tragic: because his wits have been scattered and his soul stolen, the child is stripped of the inner peace brought by the pastoral life of whistling kettles and lowing calves. Instead, the child must remain with "that bloodless dim nation."[11]

Despite the otherworldly subject of the ballad's narrative, Yeats remains true to ballad tradition by presenting all these supernatural events in a "matter-of-fact and unsensational way . . . [for] to the ballad singer there seems to be no question of a suspension of disbelief."[12] Structurally, the poem has some conventional aspects. For instance, both the first and last stanza are made up of two quatrains and a refrain. The first four lines of each stanza rhyme in the traditional abab pattern. The refrain, repeated after each of the first three stanzas, is used in a standard manner: it echoes the dominant mood or theme of the poem. Yeats also uses the refrain as an incremental device to mark the crucial action of the young boy heeding the fairies' call, this being indicated by a slight modulation in the final refrain:

> *For he comes, the human child,*
> *To the waters and the wild*
> *With a faery, hand in hand,*
> *From a world more full of weeping than he*
> *can understand.* (VP, 88-89)

Yeats intentionally disrupts prosody in this poem to prevent it from reading smoothly. Lines six, seven, and eight of the first stanza, for example, break the rhythmic pattern set by the previous five lines. This formal technique has two central effects. First, because the lines

run easily together and then suddenly do not, a tone of disquietude and ill-ease slides into the poem, paralleling the wariness with which the Irish peasantry view fairies and fear their charms. Second, because the refrain is preceded by these three rhythmically divergent lines, the lines of the refrain which are rhythmically uniform have an hypnotic effect and achieve a greater sense of the otherworldly. Through a manipulation of prosody, Yeats develops a theme based on the wisdom of folklore: the world of the fairies is unnatural to mortals; it steals away the soul and inner contentment of its human victim.

While Yeats's manipulation of form to suggest theme may be considered overly sophisticated and hence inappropriate to a literary ballad closely modeled on the traditional, precedents for such a technique can in fact be found in traditional works. What follows is the first stanza of "Lord Randal," version A:

> 'O WHERE ha you been, Lord Randal, my son?
> And where ha you been, my handsome young man?'
> 'I ha been at the greenwood; mother, mak my bed soon,
> For I'm wearied wi hunting, and fain wad lie down.'[13]

Lord Randal's reply takes five more syllables than does his mother's question. Moreover, line three, "'I ha been at the greenwood; Mother, mak my bed soon,'" lacks a transition between its two parts: Randal's request for a bed illogically follows his assertion as to where he has been. Through the languid yet abrupt metre in Randal's speech, the poet of "Lord Randal" suggests a fatal poisoning long before language makes this fact explicit. Clearly, Yeats's skilled use of metre in "The Stolen Child" stands on firmly traditional ground.

Yeats was not long pleased with the quality of his early ballad work, however. On March 14, 1888, he writes that in the process of

revision, he discovers much of his poetry to be

> a flight into fairyland from the real world, and a summons to that flight. The Chorus to the 'Stolen Child' sums it up--that it is not the poetry of insight and knowledge, but of longing and complaint--the cry of the heart against necessity. I hope some day to alter that and write poetry of insight and knowledge. (L, 63)

For Yeats, there is no longer enough intensity in poetry which imitates love ballads or reiterates the superstitious wisdom of the Irish peasantry. In his search for "a style and things to write about" Yeats begins to follow less closely the narrative sources of his ballads and to emphasize the more literary possibilities of the ballad form. In "The Ballad of Moll Magee" and "The Ballad of Father O'Hart," for example, Yeats ignores the customary subordination of all ballad elements to narrative and focuses on a literary device not generally found in the traditional ballad, characterization.

"The Ballad of Moll Magee" (first published 1889; VP, 94) is based on a sermon given in the chapel at Howth (C, 18). On a number of levels, the ballad is traditional: its theme of domestic tragedy is shown by G.H. Gerould to be frequently repeated in the ballad (B, 49-50). Use of a first person narrator is also rooted in custom, albeit less firmly (B, 8-9). Language is simple--no complex analogies or esoteric allusions are found in this poem. Moll's narrative lyricism is confined to lines such as "When the morn grew frosty and clear" (VP, 95), and the extent of her didacticism is contained in the stanza which follows her sad tale:

> So now, ye little childer,
> Ye won't fling stones at me;
> But gather with your shinin' looks
> And pity Moll Magee. (VP, 96)

Yeats's main interest in this poem, however, is not to imitate the traditional but to capture and present the characteristics of an eccentric wanderer marked by a tragic past. Yeats was interested at this time in the notion of personality and "personal utterance" (A, 102), a concept which later figures prominently in the philosophy of *A Vision*. The idea of personality explained why Yeats was moved by the verses of a poorly written ballad he read when a member of the Young Ireland Society:

> They had moved me because they contained the actual thoughts of a man at a passionate moment of life, and when I met my father I was full of the discovery. We should write out our own thoughts in as nearly as possible the language we thought them in. . . . We should not disguise them in any way; for our lives give them force as the lives of people in plays give force to their words. Personal utterance, which had almost ceased in English literature, could be as fine an escape from rhetoric and abstraction as drama itself. (A, 102)

In a 1906 essay, Yeats defines personality as the "intensity of personal life . . . the strength, the essential moment of a man . . ." (EI, 265). To convey the nature of Moll's intensity, Yeats creates a speech which complements her sentimental nature. Hence, while a mawkish narrator is inappropriate to a strictly traditional ballad, Yeats gives his speaker free rein. In the second stanza, for example, Moll paints a verbal picture of God lighting the stars, "His candles" (VP, 96) and looking benevolently down from heaven upon his poor. She imagines that her dead infant daughter knows of her keening and grief. Moll even produces a symbolic landscape which reflects her sense of being abandoned and alone:

> The windows and the doors were shut,
> One star shone faint and green,
> The little straws were turnin' round
> Across the bare boreen. (VP, 95)

Clearly, through the words and feelings of Moll, Yeats pushes at the

boundaries of the traditional ballad, charging it with a degree of intense emotive meaning derived from character and not narrative event.

Yeats continues to ignore the customary subordination of literary conventions, rhetoric, and dialogue to narrative in his 1890 poem "The Ballad of Father Gilligan" (first published 1890; VP, 132). Again the focus is characterization and its portrayal through personal utterance. Like his namesake, Peter the apostle, Father Peter Gilligan must struggle between the often conflicting demands of body and spirit. For example, when Gilligan is called to administer last rites to yet another dying parishioner, his language reflects the momentary despair and frustration of a kind-hearted but physically exhausted man:

> 'I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,
> For people die and die';
> And after cried he, 'God forgive!
> My body spake, not I!' (VP, 132)

With a simplicity and brevity of language contained within strictly traditional ballad quatrains, Yeats is able to convey Father Gilligan's attractively frail qualities. Though the exhausted priest falls asleep and hence fails to reach in time the deathbed to which he has been summoned, he is seen by the reader as a faithful servant of God who is truly conscious of his religious duties and genuinely concerned about his parishioners. And because Yeats so effectively suggests the uncluttered nature of Gilligan's faith, it seems uncontrived and entirely appropriate that the priest receive divine assistance from one of God's angels. But, it should be noted, as characterization is the poem's focus, the priest's reaction to the miracle is even more important than the narrative event itself. Says Gilligan:

'He Who hath made the night of stars
For souls who tire and bleed,
Sent one of His great angels down
To help me in my need.

'He Who is wrapped in purple robes,
With planets in His care,
Had pity on the least of things
Asleep upon a chair.' (VP, 134)

Though the recipient of a miracle, the old priest does not feel elevated above the rest of humanity: he unpretentiously maintains a sense of unworthiness and humility.

In both "The Ballad of Moll Magee" and "The Ballad of Father Gilligan," Yeats emphasizes characterization to expand the scope of the ballad form. Yeats continues this conscious expansion in "The Host of the Air" (first published 1893; VP, 143), a poem which at first glance seems only to be a polished literary version of a traditional Gaelic ballad.

Yeats's note after the title of the poem states: "I heard the story on which this ballad is founded from an old woman at Balesodare, Sligo. She repeated me a Gaelic poem on the subject, and then translated it to me" (VP, 143). The poem's central image is that of a mysterious piping which is at once "so sad" and "so gay." The doubling in the structure of the refrain "And never was piping so sad,/ And never was piping so gay" (VP, 144) reflects and emphasizes the two qualities of the ethereal piping. Structurally, this piping signals the entry of the fairies when O'Driscoll begins to dream and it marks the fairies' successful escape with Bridget, his bride. Repetition of this oxymoronic image at the end of the poem when O'Driscoll has awoken not only conveys the otherworldly, unknowable reality of the Sidhe, it reflects a belief common to the Irish peasantry: the Sidhe are a mysterious but very real

presence to be cautiously avoided and deeply feared.

But while "The Host of the Air" is clearly based on the Irish folklore of the Sidhe's stealing away mortals to be one of their tribe, Yeats also encourages a literary interpretation of the poem. It is no coincidence that, like Red Hanrahan, O'Driscoll is a singer and that, like the great poet, he is momentarily bewitched by fairies who play cards with him (M, 216-18): both Red Hanrahan and O'Driscoll represent the figure of the bard.

Bridget, O'Driscoll's bride, also conveys a symbolic connotation for her name is that of the Irish culture goddess, protector, *inter alia* of the arts, knowledge, poetry, and wisdom.[14] As muse, Bridget enables the poet to hear safely the deadly siren-like music of the Sidhe, a music the antinomial, mysterious quality of which suggests the nature of wisdom and poetic inspiration. Bridget ensures that this knowledge retains some permanence: hence the poet hears the piping music even after his trance is broken. But by having Bridget borne off by the fairies, Yeats also suggests that the knowledge brought to O'Driscoll retains otherworldly, transient, and elusive qualities.

In writing a poem which at once captures a traditional Irish belief and suggests a symbolic reading, Yeats begins to move away from poetry of "a too soft simplicity"[15] and towards poetry of "insight and knowledge." It is not surprising then that in "The Song of Wandering Aengus" (first published 1897; VP, 149) Yeats structures the poem on two distinct levels. Indeed, while "The Song of Wandering Aengus" draws on traditional legends concerning the Protean abilities of goddess Danu's tribes,[16] a literary interpretation is apparent in the Danu charm which causes a "fire" in Aengus's head and effects the transformation of a

trout into a girl.

The reader is encouraged to see in Aengus the figure of the bard due to his use of poetic language and his ritualistic, symbolic perception of reality. Lyricism characterizes his speech: he refers to a "glimmering girl" and to "moth-like stars" (VP, 149), images the transient quality of which suggest the fleeting nature of poetic inspiration. Most significant, however, is the immediate analogy Aengus creates between poetic creativity and madness: "I went out to the hazel wood,/ Because a fire was in my head (VP, 149). Notably, the hazel tree is considered by the Irish to be the Tree of Knowledge and "the tree of the heavens" (C, 62).

The girl whom Aengus seeks will certainly bring him bardic knowledge and inspiration. As Aengus asserts;

> I will find out where she has gone,
> And kiss her lips and take her hands;
> And walk among long dappled grass,
> And pluck till time and times are done
> The silver apples of the moon,
> The golden apples of the sun. (VP, 150)

Like Bridget, the "glimmering girl" of this poem represents the elusive muse.

The images which Yeats uses to convey poetic inspiration are effective. The golden and silver apples echo the guarded golden apple of the Hesperides which in Tennyson's poem represents poetic knowledge and inspiration.[17] They also have a biblical connotation, suggesting the Garden of Eden myth, knowledge of good and evil. Moreover, it is significant that the silver moon and golden sun images act as symbols of perfection by calling upon the alchemical fusing of solar and lunar principles (C, 39). Within the context of Yeats's interest in alchemy

as a member of the Order of the Golden Dawn, these images invoke the notion of spiritual transformation, of "psychic transformation and simultaneous transcendence."[18] This, according to James Olney, is the goal of alchemy pursued as philosophy rather than as a mundane means of changing lead into gold.[19] As in "The Song of Wandering Aengus," then, Yeats focuses on the antinomial qualities of an image and their resolution thereby foreshadowing the very basis of his philosophy presented in *A Vision*. And by choosing such a focus, Yeats pushes his poetry well beyond the traditional range of ballad subject matter to a symbolic narrative which portrays poetic inspiration in its ideal form: accessible, concrete, and tangibly beautiful.

The same symbolism which animates "The Song of Wandering Aengus" diminishes its ballad qualities. Though each stanza relies on coupled quatrains, a traditional rhyme pattern contained within four tetrameter lines, and an apparently simple use of language, its focus is literary and esoteric. "The Song of Wandering Aengus" is therefore similar to Yeats's 1894 ballad "The Cap and Bells" (first published 1894; VP, 159) in which he uses symbol extensively. In fact, Yeats retains in this latter ballad all the formal elements of the traditional ballad not for the purpose of intensifying the poem's narrative but actually to diminish its importance. Yeats's purpose in "The Cap and Bells" is the conscious development and interaction of symbol.

The complexity of "The Cap and Bells" is not at first obvious. Structurally, it is typical of most ballads because it focuses on a central event, relying on simple language, traditional ballad quatrains rhyming abcb, and uniform metre. Moreover, the language of the first stanza indicates that Yeats's poem is simply a variation on the traditional

folk ballad theme of love. But neither ballad structure nor narrative preserve their initial simplicity. While Yeats maintains a ballad style throughout the poem, a cumulative and complex meaning arises through the poem's interaction of symbols.

The queen, garrisoned in a castle, refuses to accept the jester's separate gifts of soul and heart. The soul, sent to the queen in a blue garment, proves ineffective although "It had grown wise-tongued by thinking/ Of a quiet and light footfall" (VP, 159). The jester's heart, dressed in "a red and quivering garment" (VP, 160), sings to the queen but, even though it has grown "sweet-tongued by dreaming" (VP, 160), it also is unsuccessful. Through the soul, wise-tongued by thinking, Yeats shows that the extreme of reason leads to a rigid, overconceptualized, and analytic understanding of love. And the heart, sweet-tongued by dreaming, suggests that this extreme leads to excessive sincerity and a contemplation which is impotent, perhaps even narcissistic. Therefore, the discerning queen rejects both the jester's gifts.

Only when the jester offers the queen his cap and bells does she finally prove receptive, singing them a love-song "Till stars grew out of the air" (VP, 160). The cap and bells, symbol of the jester's art, prepare the way for and give appropriate focus and intensity to wisdom and dreams, soul and heart. Hence, it is only through the moderating power of the cap and bells that the queen accepts his earlier gifts.

Through the agency of the queen, the jester's muse, a happy union of art, soul, and heart leads to the creation of song. Yeats signals through a subtle shift in language the unity this song effects between the opposites of heart and soul: the soul, once wise-tongued, and the heart, once sweet-tongued, are suddenly rendered poetically

articulate. They create "A chattering wise and sweet" (VP, 161).

The queen is also transformed by the song she helps create by accepting the jester's gifts. This transformation Yeats implies through his description of her hair. The modulation of the simile of stanza five (in which the queen is described as having a "flutter of flower-like hair") to a metaphor in the final stanza ("And her hair was a folded flower") marks the transition from the queen symbolizing beauty and poetic inspiration to literally becoming that beauty and inspiration.

In "The Cap and Bells" the interaction of symbols, the concluding movement from simile to metaphor, and the complexity of structure render Yeats's ballad increasingly intricate. Both jester and queen lose their literal identities and assume an abstract significance. The jester becomes the belabored artist who, seeking to create a beautiful art form, appeals to the queen *cum* muse. The queen, once successfully wooed, becomes catalyst to song, bringing an essential unity and balance to the divergent characteristics which compose the artist and his work.

Several other interpretations are sustained by this highly symbolic poem. According to Richard Ellmann, "The Cap and Bells" reveals that the jester can prove acceptable to the queen only when he offers the essence of himself (his cap and bells), as opposed to the "trappings of common romance."[20] J. H. Natterstad, on the other hand, offers a much more complicated interpretation. He suggests that

> When the jester symbolically offers his art, the queen--who in her delicate loveliness personifies Beauty--passionately accepts his gift. . . . Art has reconciled the opposites [of heart and soul] and, in doing so, has merged with the beautiful. The poem, then, can be read as a symbolic rendering of Yeats' own aesthetic position, which holds that beauty is a product of the integrative function of art.[21]

Harold Bloom, conversely, discovers a sinister meaning in "The Cap and Bells." Referring to the jester's ultimate gift of his genius which causes his death, and the song which the queen's "red lips sang" to the cap and bells, Bloom states:

> What is this but a dream version of that central Yeatsian image, out of the Decadence, of the dancer with the severed head? True, she [the queen] proceeds to gather up the heart and the soul . . . but this is not to say that she revives the presumably deceased jester. The dream-poem's bitterness is one with the central emotion of the volume, the defeated lover's rejection of nature and his longing for cataclysm.[22]

Clearly, the divergent critical commentary on "The Cap and Bells" reflects its sustained complexity.

And it is the path of sustained complexity that Yeats chooses to pursue in his post-1916 ballads. In the period between 1897 and 1916, Yeats writes fewer ballads and those he does compose are not remarkable for their innovation.[23] Disillusioned with the lyric mode of the Rhymers which Yeats says had "left me at last worn out with a nervous excitement,"[24] Yeats turns much of his attention to drama as a means of evoking intense emotion in his audience. He seeks to make "a drama of energy" (Ex, 170), anticipating that his plays would express personality and emotion for those like him who

> cannot see reality anywhere but in the soul itself, and seeing it there . . . cannot do other than rejoice in every energy, whether of gesture, or of action, or of speech, coming out of the personality, the soul's image. . . . (Ex, 170)

As Robert O'Driscoll comments, within the same context,

> Personal emotion is objectified through myth, or through an artist's belief in the recurrence of myth, the belief that human beings constantly re-enact the great myths that have been articulated in the past. Through the interrelation of the arts also, through verse, music, song, and dance, the

> poetic dramatist could attain the distance from life that makes credible strange events, elaborate words, and could excite in one visionary but vulnerable moment the radical mystery and innocence that existed before man desecrated the stage with mimicry, naturalism, and a mechanical sequence of ideas.[25]

In 1917, Yeats begins to find an articulation of the radical mystery of existence through the writing of *A Vision*. And his subsequent poetry testifies to the profound influence these ideas had on Yeats's career. Indeed, Yeats fills his late poetry with the concepts of *A Vision*, heightening in his work the intellectual challenge offered by ballads like "The Cap and Bells." By the 1930s, while still intent on writing powerful, intense poetry, Yeats divorces himself from the simple, sentimental world of Moll Magee and begins in earnest to create a dramatically new ballad form.

CHAPTER TWO

THE EFFECT OF *A VISION* ON YEATS'S BALLADS

Yeats describes the genesis of *A Vision* in the following way:

> On the afternoon of October 24th 1917 . . . my wife surprised me by attempting automatic writing. What came in disjointed sentences, in almost illegible writing, was so exciting, sometimes so profound, that I persuaded her to give an hour or two day after day to the unknown writer, and after some half-dozen such hours offered to spend what remained of life explaining and piecing together those scattered sentences. "No," was the answer, "we have come to give you metaphors for poetry." (V, 8)

By means of a system he derived from his wife's automatic writing, Yeats attempts to explain in *A Vision* the workings of the cosmos by number, geometry, and symbol. For the complexity this involves, Yeats half apologizes: "Some, perhaps all, of those readers I most value . . . will be repelled by what must seem an arbitrary, harsh, difficult symbolism" (V, 23). But, in fact, the difficulties posed by *A Vision* arise only when Yeats describes the intricate and particular manifestations of his system; the fundamental ideas informing it are neither overly esoteric nor particularly new.

A Vision's central concept of the interaction between opposites can be traced back to ideas Yeats held in his youth. As a young man, Yeats began "to think in antithetical terms"[1] and "noted everywhere about him confirmation of his sense of internal division."[2] Yeats's choice of a name as member of the Order of the Golden Dawn shows a focus on contraries: *Demon Est Deus Inversus*.[3] This same focus is evident in

his art. In the 1891 story *John Sherman*, for example, Yeats explores the opposite natures of two characters, Sherman and Howard. Howard typifies the difference between them in the following way:

> 'you Shermans are a deep people, much deeper than we Howards. We are like moths or butterflies, or rather rapid rivulets, while you and yours are deep pools in the forest where the beasts go to drink. No! I have a better metaphor. Your mind and mine are two arrows. Yours has got no feathers, and mine has no metal on the point. . . . I suppose it will be all right some day when the world has gone by and they have collected all the arrows into one quiver.' (JS & D, 95)

In both *Rosa Alchemica* and *The Tables of the Law* Yeats creates characters who experience internal divisions. In the latter story, Yeats describes the character Aherne as having a nature "which is half monk, half soldier of fortune, and must needs turn action into dreaming, and dreaming into action" (TL, 103). In *Rosa Alchemica*, the first person narrator confesses that "even in my most perfect moment I would be two selves, the one watching with heavy eyes the other's moment of content" (M, 269). Moreover, the antithetical symbols of sun and moon which are so extensively used in *A Vision* had appeared in Yeats's diary by 1889[4] and in "The Song of Wandering Aengus," thought to have been written as early as 1893 (C, 61).

A Vision is therefore most accurately described as a systematization or "organic extension"[5] of Yeats's early ideas and symbols. But in Yeats's mind, it marks a watershed in his development as poet and philosopher, providing

> stylistic arrangements of experience comparable to the cubes in the drawing of Wyndham Lewis and to the ovoids in the sculpture of Brancusi. They have helped me to hold in a single thought reality and justice. (V, 25)

One is not surprised then that an understanding of these stylistic

arrangements proves crucial to an understanding of Yeats's later poetry.

Whereas in his earlier work Yeats was more interested in a simple contrast between ideas or between poetic structures, the central concept in *A Vision* is that of the complex interaction of the primary and antithetical. The nature of this interaction is not realized through a simple juxtaposition of the sacred and the secular, of science and art, of necessity and freedom or of any pair of opposites. Instead, Yeats follows a distinctly Platonic tradition by focusing on the effect of a two-fold division; this effect, described by the Platonist Porphyry, is succinctly translated by Thomas Taylor, a philosopher who influenced Yeats's thought:

> diversity is the origin of nature. . . . In like manner some parts of the world have a dexter, and others a sinister position. Thus too night is opposed to day; and the harmony of the universe consists from the amicable junction of contrary and not similar natures.[6]

According to Yeats the gyre, which in *A Vision* acts as symbol for the division between and interaction of the primary and antithetical, is derived from Empedocles's notion of concord and discord, of homogeny and chaos. On the advice of spirit "instructors," Yeats adopts the geometrical form of a double cone to illustrate the three-dimensional relationship of forces moving within time and space. Combining line with plane, Yeats produces a gyre which starts in objectivity and expands to subjectivity while an opposing gyre starts in subjectivity and expands into objectivity. The result is a diagram of interpenetrating cones which move in a whirling fashion reflecting the flux produced as the states of subjectivity and objectivity affect each other.

The use of a whirling gyre to symbolize the interaction of two opposite states is Platonic in origin. It echoes Plato's statement in the *Phaedo* that "the soul is drawn into body with a *staggering* motion."[7] It also parallels a description by the Platonist Apuleius of Psyche, or soul, having "*a stumbling and often reeling gait*" due to an "illicit perception" of her opposite, pure desire, as symbolized by Cupid.[8]

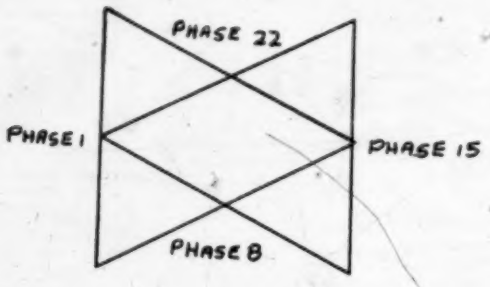
The interaction of Yeats's primary and antithetical tinctures is not the only motion within the interpenetrating cones. Yeats introduces as well the motion of the four Faculties which act in the gyres; the Faculties are necessary to identify fully the prevailing nature of a given thought, individual, or civilization which the gyres represent. The Faculties are subdivided into Will and the Mask, the Creative Mind and the Body of Fate. For Yeats, they represent "what man has made in a past or present life" (V, 71). Under the primary tincture, characterized as objective and solar, falls the Creative Mind and the Body of Fate. Conversely, the Will and the Mask come into the antithetical tincture which is lunar and subjective. Yeats defines the four Faculties in this way:

> It will be enough until I have explained the geometrical diagrams in detail to describe *Will* and *Mask* as the will and its object, or the Is and the Ought (or that which should be), *Creative Mind* and *Body of Fate* as thought and its object, or the Knower and the Known. (V, 73)

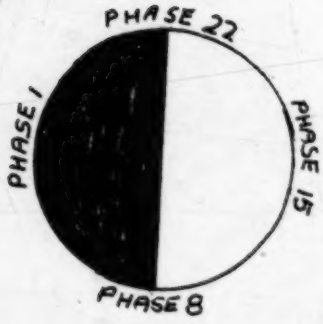
These two pairs of contraries and the tinctures within which they fall remain in constant flux, whirling in opposite directions and therefore changing the relationship amongst the four Faculties.

The changing relationships represent states of being or phases which Yeats describes in great detail and numbers in order to create a

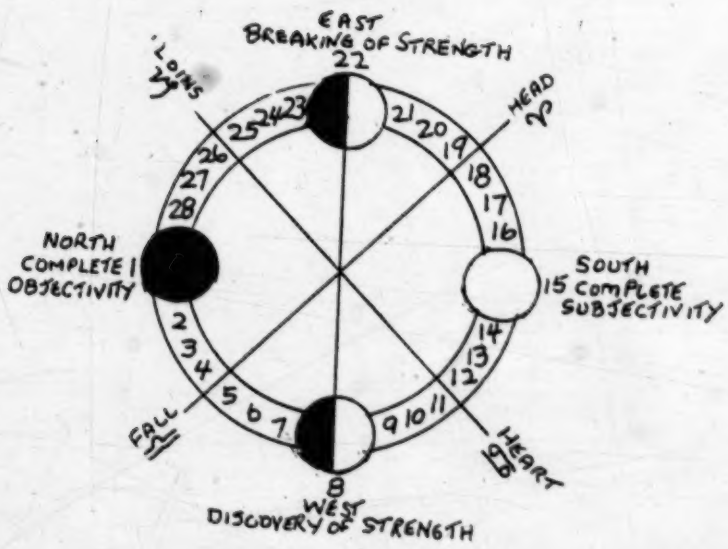
system of classification. And it being "more convenient" to set the number of each phase around a circle, Yeats temporarily drops the gyre symbol. His diagrams evolve from this:



to this:



to the Great Wheel:



Yeats's Great Wheel corresponds to the 28 phases of the moon. Through these phases and the interaction of the four Faculties which define each phase, Yeats is able to classify "every possible movement of thought and of life" (V, 78). This includes the classification of as large a phenomenon as a civilization whose cycle is made up of two millennia. The first cycle, being primary, is "objective, democratic, self-sacrificing, and theistic"[9] while the second is "subjective, aristocratic, violent, and antinomian."[10] The Platonic origin of this perspective is unmistakable in the context of Thomas Taylor's remarks on history, culture, and scholarship:

> The face of things is continually changing; and the perfect and perpetual harmony of the universe subsists by the mutability of its parts. In consequence of this fluctuation, different arts and sciences have flourished at different periods of the world. . . . Where accurate and profound researches into the principles of things have advanced to perfection, there, by a natural consequence, men have neglected the disquisition of particulars: and where sensible particulars have been the general object of pursuit, the science of universals has languished, or sunk into oblivion and contempt.[11]

According to Yeats, the Great Wheel is "every completed movement of thought or life, twenty-eight incarnations, a single incarnation, a single judgment or act of thought" (V, 81). The individual travels through the 28 phases, propelled by the violent oscillation between extremes which is the force behind human life:

> Man seeks his opposite or the opposite of his condition, attains his object so far as it is attainable, at Phase 15 and returns to Phase 1 again. (V, 81)

Without this ongoing conflict, human consciousness would be impossible and the human soul would never sink "in on that Whole where the contraries are united, the antinomies resolved" (V, 89). Yeats's view that such a

resolution can take place only after death (V, 188-89) is similar to that of Plato, who asserts:

> For if it is impossible in company with the body to know anything purely, one thing of two follows: either knowledge is possible nowhere, or only after death; for then alone the soul will be quite by itself apart from the body. . . . And so, pure and rid of the body's foolishness, we shall probably be in the company of those like ourselves, and shall know through our own selves complete incontamination, and that is perhaps the truth.[12]

In comparing *A Vision* to the ovoids of Brancusi's sculpture and in emphasizing that the system's geometric forms have only a "symbolic relation to spaceless reality" (V, 69), Yeats aligns himself by analogy with Thomas Taylor's view that Platonism "is an informing principle rather than a formulation."[13] That is, Yeats sees *A Vision* or Platonism as explanations, not dogma. When the spirits who impart to Yeats his system describe themselves as a distortion or reflection of reality and suggest that Yeats's system is derived from the Daimons, the "blessed spirits . . . sought within the self which is common to all" (V, 22), they echo the Platonic concept of the Realm of Ideas through which one apprehends the transcendent reality "immanent in particular things."[14] They also parallel Taylor's remark that the philosophy of Platonism, "by whose assistance these mysteries are developed, . . . is coeval with the universe itself."[15] And, indeed, the fictitious Aherne refers directly to Platonism when he writes to Yeats: "I recall what Plato said of memory, and suggest that your automatic script . . . may well have been but a process of remembering" (V, 54).

* * *

Yeats seeks to articulate in his poetry the truths of *A Vision* through symbols given to him by his spirit instructors. These symbols

act as concrete tools for the apprehension of Yeats's abstract cosmology. As Northrop Frye asserts:

> poetic symbolism is language and not truth, a means of expression and not a body of doctrine, not something to look at but something to look and speak through, a dramatic mask.[16]

But Yeats's initial attempts at presenting his philosophy through poetry verge on the inaccessible. Poems like "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes," "The Phases of the Moon," and "An Image from a Past Life" have little life independent of *A Vision*, being incomprehensible without a sound knowledge of Yeats's complex schema. Indeed, such poems are consistent with his conviction that "invisible gates would open as they opened for Blake, as they opened for Swedenborg" (A, 254) and "that I must someday--on that day when the gates began to open--become difficult or obscure" (A, 254). Yeats is perhaps more successful when he returns to the ballad form as medium through which to present the ideas of *A Vision*. Such a genre is certainly more in keeping with the poetic objectives Yeats describes in his 1937 essay "A General Introduction for My Work":

> When I speak blank verse and analyse my feelings, I stand at a moment of history when instinct, its traditional songs and dances, its general agreement, is of the past. . . . The contrapuntal structure of the verse . . . combines the past and present. If I repeat the first line of *Paradise Lost* so as to emphasise its five feet I am among the folk singers--'Of mán's first dísobédience ánd the frúit,' but speak it as I should I cross it with another emphasis, that of passionate prose--'Of mán's fírst dísobédience and the frúit,' or 'Of mán's fírst dísobedience and the frúit'; the folk song is still there, but a ghostly voice, an unvariable possibility, an unconscious norm. What moves me and my hearer is a vivid speech that has no laws except that it must not exorcise the ghostly voice. (EI, 524)

In expressing his refined understanding of how to achieve passionate intensity in his poetry, Yeats recognizes that his difficult

philosophy must be conveyed in a dynamic, aesthetic context: one must create a vivid speech which combines the human vitality contained in the rhetorical rhythm of folk song with the emotive power of poetic metre. Because he seeks in his subsequent ballads to balance esoterism with folk wisdom, the literary with the seemingly rustic, the polished with the seemingly ingenuous, Yeats conveys all the complexity of *A Vision* while never exorcising the ghostly voice of folk song.

Yeats preserves the voice of folk song, then, by maintaining certain characteristics of the traditional ballad. In "The Three Bushes" (first published 1937; VP, 569), for example, he creates a ballad which he claims is based on "AN INCIDENT FROM THE 'HISTORIA MEI TEMPORIS' OF THE ABBÉ MICHEL DE BOURDEILLE"[17] and in so doing aligns himself with those bards who traditionally drew upon historical events as the basis for their work. While the metrics and stanza form used are not of the traditional ballad, the strong dramatic sense so characteristic of the genre is evident throughout the poem, particularly in the following stanza:

> 'I love a man in secret,
> Dear chambermaid,' said she.
> 'I know that I must drop down dead
> If he stop loving me,
> Yet what could I but drop down dead
> If I lost my chastity?
> *O my dear, O my dear.*
> (VP, 569-70)

The lady gives two possible courses of action, conceptualizing and expressing both in their most extreme form. Repetition of the phrase "drop down dead," as well as the "d"-sound alliteration, focuses attention on the lady's hyperbolic words, hence adding to their emphasis.

But while the lady states matters dramatically, the narrator

maintains a studied objectivity and gives a traditionally rapid, unsentimental description of the ballad action. The deaths of the young man and the lady, for example, are related in one brief stanza, the pathos of which reflects a conventional lack of protest and a narrative distance from events.

The ballad refrain "*O my dear, O my dear*" performs a standard function in the poem; it is an agent of emphasis echoing the poem's dominant mood or theme. For while the refrain sustains two meanings--one of concern, the other of love and affection--it does not forward ballad action but merely emphasizes it. Yeats's stylized use of language is intended to sustain the ballad mood as well. For example, when the now aged chambermaid makes confession to a priest, we are told that "And O he was a good man/ And understood her case" (VP, 571). While the word "O" provides a necessary stressed syllable to the line, its primary function is to lend the quaintness of folk song to a literary ballad.

Like the traditional ballad maker, Yeats presents unusual or otherworldly events in a matter-of-fact manner. The growing together of the rose bushes in the last stanza is a matter for him to relate, not explain. For the same reason, Yeats avoids entirely any note of didacticism in the ballad; he does not insist on the familiar symbolical implications of the entwined rose bush roots. In short, Yeats creates a traditional ballad which

> tells a story with stress on the crucial situation, tells it by letting the action unfold itself in event and speech, and tells it objectively with little comment or intrusion of personal bias. (B, 11)

The similarities between "The Three Bushes" and the well known ballad "Barbara Allen" are further testimony to the traditional nature of

Yeats's ballad. Like the author of "Barbara Allen," Yeats tells a story about ill-fated love. Like the character Barbara Allen, the lady in "The Three Bushes" refers to her loved one by the epithet "young man." Both Barbara Allen and the lady die soon after the premature death of their lovers. The most significant parallel between the two poems, however, is found in their respective conclusions. On Barbara's grave grows a brier while on the grave of her lover grows a rose:

> They grew and they grew to the top of the church-house
> Till they could not grow any higher,
> And there they tied in a true love's knot,
> And the rose wrapped round the brier.[18]

In Yeats's ballad, roses also figure prominently. A rose bush grows on the grave of the young lady and another on the grave of the young man. In time, it seemed as if these bushes had "sprung from but a single root" (VP, 571). When the chambermaid dies, a rose bush is planted on her grave as well:

> And now none living can,
> When they have plucked a rose there,
> Know where its roots began. (VP, 571)

Unlike Yeats's early rose symbolism which is Rosicrucian in origin, the rose in this poem appears to function solely as a traditional symbol for love. According to Barbara Seward, Yeats at this time was working towards "a more objective outlook and technic. . . . [He] left behind him the unharmonious rose of his indefinite, introverted youth."[19] As a result, the rose in some of Yeats's later poetry conveys "old meanings in simple, metaphoric fashion."[20]

Clearly, in both "Barbara Allen" and "The Three Bushes" the rose functions as a simple metaphor for an uncomplicated notion of human

love. But Seward's characterization of the rose is incomplete. Within the larger context of the six poems which follow and amplify "The Three Bushes," Yeats's rose takes on the ideas of *A Vision* and acts as symbol for the transcendent unity of antinomies. For, if the influence of *A Vision* on "The Three Bushes" is not immediately evident, it is unmistakable in the six short poems (first published 1938; VP, 572-75) which follow "The Three Bushes." Governing these poems are notions critical to *A Vision*, most notably that of personality, defined by Yeats as the "intensity of personal life . . . the strength, the essential moment of a man" (EI, 265). Through the creation of a lyrical voice for each character, Yeats explores the perceptions of the lady, the chambermaid, and the young man within the context of his philosophy. These perceptions are seemingly complete in themselves but through "The Three Bushes" are revealed to be interdependent and fragmentary, each being a conforming of narrative context to a particular character. And because a key function of "The Three Bushes" is to put into a unified perspective these six poems which otherwise appear to be thematically scattered, "The Three Bushes" by necessity becomes charged with the ideas explored in *A Vision*.

With the exception of the lady's second and third songs, the poems which follow "The Three Bushes" take the form of dramatic monologues. Yeats drops the ballad elements which appear so prominently in "The Three Bushes" because his focus is not on narrative action but on personal utterance. Having as his aesthetic objective the revelation of antinomies acting within the characters first presented in "The Three Bushes," Yeats finds inappropriate within this series the objective reporting of speech and event characteristic of the traditional ballad.

"The Lady's First Song" is a lyrical expression of stanzas two

and three of "The Three Bushes."[21] It provides further background to the lady's assertion that "'what could I but drop down dead/ If I lost my chastity?'" (VP, 569-70), and her command to the chambermaid that "'you must lie beside him/ And let him think me there'" (VP, 570). This first poem constitutes a monologue in which the lady expresses her moral disgust at the physical attraction she feels towards her young man:

> I am in love
> And that is my shame.
> What hurts the soul
> My soul adores,
> No better than a beast
> Upon all fours. (VP, 572)

The lady feels ashamed of her sexuality because hers is a Platonic sensibility; surrendering to the body therefore renders her inarticulate: "I turn round/ Like a dumb beast in a show" (VP, 572).

The focus in the poem is that of the Platonic mind-body duality. Yeats presents the antinomy of the spiritual and the physical, the desires of the body and the dictates of the soul. These are appropriately reflected in the juxtaposition of language, notably between the verbs "hurts" and "adores" and between the adjective "dumb" and the noun "language." These juxtapositions serve to reinforce the critical tensions existing between the lady's perception of herself as an animal controlled by instinct and as a human being ruled by her mind or soul. Because she cannot see a resolution to this fundamental tension, the lady draws the same conclusion that Plato does in the following passage:

> '. . . When soul and body are together, our nature assigns the body to be slave and to be ruled, and the soul to be ruler and master. . . . Don't you think the divine [the soul] is naturally such as to rule and to guide, and the mortal [the body] such as to be ruled and to be a slave?'[22]

The lady in "The Three Bushes" therefore puts into action a Platonic scheme through which mind dominates body: she charges her chambermaid with the physical duties of love.

The antinomies in "The Lady's Second Song" go beyond exploring the lady's ideas about herself, however, and examine the relationship between the young man, the chambermaid, and the lady. The antinomies in this poem are presented through a juxtaposition of language and through the tensions articulated between physical qualities and spiritual ones. Most significant to the development of theme is Yeats's untraditional use of a traditional ballad device, the refrain. Through the tensions he creates between stanza and refrain, Yeats presents the idea of the antinomy through poetic structure, not language.

The following stanza reveals the lady's intellectual grasp of love's antinomies. She says to her chambermaid:

> He shall love my soul as though
> Body were not at all,
> He shall love your body
> Untroubled by the soul,
> Love cram love's two divisions
> Yet keep his substance whole.
> *The Lord have mercy upon us.*
> (VP, 572-73)

Conscious of the transcendent unity of love springing from its spiritual and physical nature, the lady seeks to justify her Platonic scheme of dividing love. In the first stanza, the lady claims that it should make no difference whether she physically loves her young man or whether she sends the chambermaid as a replacement: "What matter, we are but women" (VP, 572). In the next stanza, the lady suggests that love's two divisions can be crammed yet remain whole for the young man because he believes that it is the lady who has been coming to him at night. From

his deluded perspective, the young man has not had his love divided between the chambermaid and lady. In the third stanza, the lady asserts that in splitting love's antinomy, one cannot say whether the physical or spiritual role is most blest. But the lady's case for splitting love is undercut by the refrain "*The Lord have mercy upon us.*" The refrain intimates her unarticulated anxiety over an arrangement based on deception and division. In this way, Yeats suggests through structure the antinomy between the Platonic perception of love and the Christian one, between an adoption of a philosophical stance and an inability to admit openly that stance, between an arrangement dictated by the soul and the imposition of that arrangement on the body.

The lady hints at an increased willingness to accept her sexual nature in the modulation of the phrase "dumb beast" in the first stanza to "noble beast" in the second, and by her question "If soul may look and body touch,/ Which is the more blest?" (VP, 573). But while she seems less convinced by the Platonic solution to love's antinomies, she continues to fragment love. Unable to participate in love's unity, her speech is full of references to unresolved antinomies of body and soul, breast and limb, look and touch. In fact, the lady concludes her second song with an either-or proposition.

In "The Lady's Third Song," the lady says this to the chambermaid:

> When you and my true lover meet
> And he plays tunes between your feet,
> Speak no evil of the soul,
> Nor think that body is the whole,
> For I that am his daylight lady
> Know worse evil of the body.
> (VP, 573)

By suggesting that the body can do more evil than the soul, the lady

rationalizes her loyalty to soul over body and her commitment to the Platonic plan. But in doing so the lady unconsciously reveals dissatisfaction with an arrangement in which she gives up sexual pleasure to her servant. The use of two imperatives in four lines reinforces the poem's tone of chastisement and suggests that despite her intellectual acceptance of soul over body, she is jealous of the chambermaid's physical closeness to her young man. This interpretation is sustained by the assertion in "The Three Bushes" that the lady would heave a sigh "if the chambermaid/ Looked half asleep all day" (VP, 570). The lady's discontent with her singular role as the young man's daylight lady is revealed in her assertion that "[I] in honour split his love/ Till either neither have enough" (VP, 573). The "either neither" construction of this line emphasizes the incompleteness of her relationship with the young man as do her several references to the unresolved antinomies of body and soul, hiss and sigh, split and whole, serpent and heavens. In fact, the serpent and heavens dichotomy emphasizes the body-soul tension central to the poem. The serpent in Yeats's view represents the physical, that which is experienced (M, 340). It also represents the physical manifestation of evil represented in Genesis as a serpent coiled around the Tree of Knowledge.

Because the chambermaid is the agent who fulfills the purely physical part of the love between lady and young man, her monologues attest to a lack of spiritual affinity with or emotional commitment to the young man. In her first song, she asks:

> How came this ranger
> Now sunk in rest,
> Stranger with stranger,
> On my cold breast? (VP, 574)

The coupling of the words "stranger with stranger" and the adjective "cold" affirm the strictly physical relationship she has with the young man. The first stanza of her monologue consists of a question reflecting her puzzlement with an arrangement which crams "love's two divisions" (VP, 573). The chambermaid's emotional detachment from the relationship is emphasized by her observation not of the sensual but of the merely physical. She notes: "Pleasure has made him/ Weak as a worm" (VP, 574).

In her second song, the chambermaid remarks:

> From pleasure of the bed,
> Dull as a worm,
> His rod and it butting head
> Limp as a worm,
> His spirit that has fled
> Blind as a worm. (VP, 575)

Again, the chambermaid objectively observes the strictly physical. Her words are couched in an emotionally detached rhetoric which reveals the insufficiency of physical love in the absence of spiritual affinity. There being no relationship between the young man and the chambermaid beyond the physical, the young man's spirit departs the moment after orgasm.

The young man, in contrast, is thoroughly satisfied with the relationship he has with the lady and, unwittingly, with the chambermaid. It is appropriate therefore that in "The Lover's Song," he focus not on the conflict between love's antinomies but on its peaceful, harmonious unity:

> Bird sighs for the air,
> Thought for I know not where,
> For the womb the seed sighs.
> Now sinks the same rest
> On mind, on nest,
> On straining thighs. (VP, 574)

There is no unresolved opposition in this poem between the physical, suggested by the words "womb," "seed," "nest," "straining thighs" and the spiritual, suggested by the words "thought" and "mind." The physical and spiritual sink on "the same rest." This reflects Yeats's view that the natural union of man and woman symbolizes "that eternal instant where the antinomy is resolved" (V, 214).

The young man suggests the transcendent contentment which accompanies the resolution of mind and body through the poem's bird imagery as well as through the unvoiced "s" sound of the words "sighs," "sinks," and "same." And it is this resolution which the young man celebrates in "The Three Bushes" by singing "'A laughing, crying, sacred song,/ A leching song'" (VP, 570).

The image of the rose bushes suggests the unification of the dualistic relationship amongst the lady, chambermaid, and young man. Though the chambermaid remains spiritually aloof from the young man, their physical love creates a bond which parallels the spiritual bond between the young man and his lady. It is this bond which the priest in "The Three Bushes" recognizes in ordering that the chambermaid be buried by her lady's man and that a rose bush be set upon her grave. It is also appropriate that during the chambermaid's long life, she tend the graves of the lady and young man. The physical liaison she provided between the two helped them ultimately achieve the transcendent unity of love. The chambermaid's role in this achievement is reflected in her physical labor of gardening which causes the rose bushes on the graves of the young man and lady to have seemingly sprung "from but a single root/ So did their roses merge" (VP, 571). For the same reason the rose bush on the chambermaid's grave grows so that

now none living can,
When they have plucked a rose there,
Know where its roots began. (VP, 571)

The roses on the three graves suggest the antinomial concepts of physical passion and a sacred, spiritual affinity.[23] They therefore represent the complete and transcendent love which the chambermaid, young man, and lady achieve after death.

That the bushes entwine on the graves is of importance. In this way, Yeats suggests that the three characters can only experience the resolution of love's antinomy through a release from all of life's antinomies. In death, the two women are liberated from opposing roles in a relationship which emphasized love's divisions. As T. R. Henn remarks on Yeats's schema: "Opposites can only be resolved in the after-life. . . . True love is only possible in the divine world."[24]

Through the rose image, Yeats posits more than a simple symbol for love. On the basis of ideas of *A Vision*, Yeats presents the concept of love through a complex analysis of its parts from the perspective of distinct personalities. To synthesize these fragmented perceptions, Yeats provides the reader with a metaphor but no explanation. The poet implies that a grasp of love's unity can never be fully articulated, only sensed through symbol.

When one rereads "The Three Bushes," having read the six poems which follow it, one finds the simple, unsophisticated, traditional ballad to be imbued suddenly with rich meaning and complexity. Knowledge of the complexity of the ballad's narrative is derived from knowledge of the characters involved. An understanding of love's antinomies and resolution is enriched by the dramatization of the tension between its parts. In short, Yeats ingeniously creates a traditional ballad which

can put on and take off meaning like a coat. The impact of "The Three Bushes" lies in Yeats's expression of the ideas of *A Vision* while consciously preserving the ghostly voice of folk song and tradition.

Without the unifying context which "The Three Bushes" provides for the six poems which follow it, the reader would have difficulty determining the nature of their relationship and be faced with the interpretative problems each poem poses in isolation. It is difficult, for example, to imagine how one could follow the narrative of "The Lover's Song" without the concomitant background of "The Three Bushes." Yet this is just the sort of interpretative challenge Yeats creates in the earlier "Crazy Jane" poems (first published 1930-33; VP, 507-15). On one level the problem of simple narrative interpretation exists because the series lacks a poem unifying its narrative and thematic threads. It also arises due to the nature of Yeats's narrator. Unlike the calmly analytic and clearly articulate narrators of earlier ballads like "The Host of the Air" or "The Ballad of Father Gilligan," the first person narrator of the "Crazy Jane" poems seems as demented as her name suggests. Crazy Jane's narrative appears to be haphazard, her thoughts unconnected, and her language flatly incoherent.

But like Lear's fool, Jane uses seemingly nonsensical words to express ideas of great significance. The difference is that while the profundity of the Fool's words in *King Lear* is contingent on narrative context, Jane's words take on a deeper meaning when she is cast as the narrative persona for symbolic values described in *A Vision*. Clearly, then, Yeats places an enormous demand on the reader. Unlike the six poems following "The Three Bushes," the significance of the "Crazy Jane" series depends almost entirely on one's having special knowledge of

Yeats's philosophy. And just such knowledge reveals the "Crazy Jane" poems to be a non-linear exploration of unresolved antinomies in the phenomenal world.

Throughout these poems, Yeats is interested in personal utterance but unlike the monologues of "The Three Bushes," Yeats finds certain ballad characteristics consistent with his thematic objectives. Indeed, while Yeats does not always employ ballad stanzas and never uses traditional ballad metre, he relies on the refrain in certain of the poems as a major device for the structural expression of theme. Moreover, unlike the lofty poem "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes," Yeats's "Crazy Jane" series carries with it an unsophisticated, ballad-like tone due, for the most part, to the rustic qualities of the narrator and her direct, forceful use of language. By virtue of how Jane speaks, what she chooses to remark upon, as well as through the use of some ballad structures, Yeats successfully presents the complexity of *A Vision* without pedantry, its philosophy without aesthetic sterility.

The antinomy which Jane explores in the first poem, "Crazy Jane and the Bishop," finds its crucial statement in the second refrain, "*The solid man and the coxcomb*" (VP, 508). This refrain encapsulates the rigid opposition in Jane's mind between the personality of Jack her lover and that of the Bishop whom she hates for excommunicating Jack. She asserts:

> Nor was he Bishop when his ban
> Banished Jack the Journeyman,
> *(All find safety in the tomb.)*
> Nor so much as parish priest,
> Yet he, an old book in his fist,
> Cried that we lived like beast and beast:
> *The solid man and the coxcomb.* (VP, 508)

The opposition expressed in the second refrain directs symbol and imagery into two distinct camps, one describing Jack, the other describing the Bishop.

Jack is associated with a strong, straight tree. Jane calls him "solid," he stands as a "birch tree," and he bids Jane to the oak for lovemaking. Conversely, Jane calls the Bishop a coxcomb, the Shakespearian word for fool. This is appropriate in that not only does the Bishop hold fatuous notions, but the shape of his mitre resembles the hat worn by court jesters. Because the Bishop is ugly, oppressive, and falsely religious, he is aptly described by Jane through unflattering bird images. His skin is wrinkled "like the foot of a goose. . ." and he hypocritically hides ". . . in holy black/ The heron's hunch upon his back" (VP, 508).

By referring to the heron's hunch, Jane suggests that the Bishop is a man of phase 26 in Yeats's *A Vision*, the phase of the Hunchback. Such a person when out of phase is without personality and must therefore create its "artificial semblance" (V, 177). The Bishop uses the language and doctrines of religion for just such an end. Moreover, the judgmental and destructively critical characteristics which the Bishop derives from his skewed perception of religion are consistent with an out-of-phase Hunchback whom Yeats asserts is

> full of malice because, finding no impulse but in his own ambition, he is made jealous by the impulse of others. He is all emphasis, and the greater that emphasis the more does he show himself incapable of emotion, the more does he display his sterility. (V, 178)

This partial statement of the Hunchback's personality, in conjunction with Jane's reference to the hunchbacked predatory heron, indicates that unlike Jack who symbolizes the strength and unity of life-giving forces,

the Bishop is emblematic of life-denying confrontation, divisiveness, and hate.

The tension between Jane's perception of the Bishop and of Jack embodies Yeats's distinctly Blakean sense of antinomies. In *A Vision*, Yeats carefully distinguishes between a contrary and negation when he quotes Blake's assertion that "'Contraries are positive . . . a negation is not a contrary'" (V, 72). By analogy, the personality of Jack, though opposite to that of the Bishop, is not a denial or negation of the Bishop's existence. Quite simply, their personalities are opposite and by focusing on this, Jane creates an illustrative manifestation of the Yeatsian antinomy.

While characterization conveys the notion of antinomy, together the poem's refrains convey its resolution: ". . . *All find safety in the tomb. . . . The solid man and the coxcomb*" (VP, 508). That is, the tension between the personality of a solid man like Jack and a coxcomb like the Bishop is resolved through death; indeed, "'There is a place at the bottom of the graves where contraries are equally true.'"[25] And in giving the refrain this integrative function, Yeats again breaks with ballad tradition in which the refrain acts merely as an agent for emphasis. He intends to glean from folk song the aesthetic benefit of its tone without the accompanying burden of its thematic and narrative constraints.

In "Crazy Jane and the Bishop" Yeats does not simply explore the notion of antinomy and resolution. Through the poem's very structure, he describes the motion of antinomies which animates the individual spirit. Yeats says in *A Vision* that

> the individual soul is awakened by a violent oscillation (one thinks of Verlaine oscillating between the church and the brothel) until it sinks in on that Whole where the contraries are united, the antinomies resolved. (V, 89)

Like the motion between antinomies, Jane's narrative oscillates back and forth between references to Jack and the Bishop. This rapid oscillation between the antinomies which Jack and the Bishop represent finally ceases with the resolution provided by the refrains. And as the poem concludes with a final repetition of the refrains, it structurally parallels the stillness of the resolved antinomy described.

In "Crazy Jane Reproved," poetic structure and ambiguous language militate against the reader's attempts to grasp what advice Jane is given by the unidentified speaker. But a close reading of the poem reveals it to be an exploration of the antinomy between appearance and reality, a caution to Jane against assuming that things are always what they seem. The poem's speaker begins by saying:

> I care not what the sailors say:
> All those dreadful thunder-stones,
> All that storm that blots the day
> Can but show that Heaven yawns.
> (VP, 509)

Contrary to folk wisdom, the speaker asserts that raging storms do not show the wrath of heaven but testify to its very boredom. In the context of *A Vision*, these lines describe the moment before revelation which, according to Yeats, accompanies the cyclic transition of history. The boredom of the gods prior to the instant of extreme and violent change is indeed ironic and echoes the following remark made by Yeats:

> When I think of the moment before revelation I think of Salome --she, too, delicately tinted or maybe mahogany dark--dancing before Herod and receiving the Prophet's head in her indifferent hands. (V, 273)

Like Salome, the gods are foolishly unaware of great forces in the universe which will eventually destroy them.

The speaker identifies the nature of these forces in the second stanza, by setting into motion another ironic reversal:

> To round that shell's elaborate whorl,
> Adorning every secret track
> With the delicate mother-of-pearl,
> Made the joints of Heaven crack.
> (VP, 509)

Through the shell image and its whorl, Yeats presents *A Vision*'s dominant symbol, the gyre. In this poem, the shell image can be seen as tracing the motion which accompanies the end of an old civilization: it is the whorl of a delicate little shell which will crack the joints of the pagan god's heaven, not a violent storm. As Yeats writes in his autobiography: "Is it not certain that the Creator yawns in earthquake and thunder and other popular displays, but toils in rounding the delicate spiral of a shell?" (A, 249).

The lines "Great Europa played the fool/ That changed a lover for a bull" (VP, 509) hence convey a similar meaning within two contexts. Within the context of the advice Jane is given that things are not what they seem, the lines point to Europa's foolishness in believing that the white bull which came to her in a field was in fact no more than a bull. It was just this foolishness which resulted in her being kidnapped by Zeus who, in the shape of a bull, bore Europa away on his back. Within the context of *A Vision*, the lines suggest a parallel meaning: the pagan gods will fall according to a cyclic pattern of history, hence their appearance of omnipotence is purely illusionary.

The poem culminates with the advice "So never hang your heart

upon/ A roaring, ranting journeyman" (VP, 509). While at first glance such a conclusion appears trite, the lines actually convey the notion that in a world where physical things are not what they seem, one must look beyond mere appearance. Hence Jane is wrong to fall in love with Jack who, through the adjectives "roaring, ranting" used to describe him, is closely connected to the appearance-reality antinomy conveyed both by the image of the bull and that of the storm in stanza one. By associating Jack with the purely physical, the speaker prophesies that he is incapable of emotional commitment or loyalty. Jane acknowledges the accuracy of this prediction in "Crazy Jane on God" in which she states:

> That lover of a night
> Came when he would,
> Went in the dawning light
> Whether I would or no;
> Men come, men go,
> *All things remain in God.*
> (VP, 512)

The nonsense refrain of "Crazy Jane Reproved" contrasts sharply with the serious advice given by the poem's speaker but perhaps serves an "incantatory purpose" as in ballads like "The Elfin Knight"[26] or provides an ironic contrast as in "The Cruel Mother," version 20B.[27] Through this refrain, combined with the ambiguity within each stanza, Yeats emphasizes the poem's seemingly simple, but actually contradictory and confusing rhetoric. By avoiding the precision of well articulated philosophy, Yeats also avoids the emotionally sterile language which generally accompanies it; by putting his philosophy into the mouth of a character like Jane, he achieves some of the qualities of folk song.

In the third poem of the series, "Crazy Jane on the Day of Judgment," Jane explores the antinomy of love which is described by the

character Robartes of *A Vision* in this way:

> 'Love contains all Kant's antinomies, but it is the first that poisons our lives. Thesis, there is no beginning; antithesis, there is a beginning; or, as I prefer: thesis, there is an end; antithesis, there is no end.' (V, 40)

Jane's description of love's antinomy is more succinct and in keeping with simple, ballad rhetoric:

> 'Love is all
> Unsatisfied
> That cannot take the whole
> Body and soul.'
> (VP, 510)

Like the lady in "The Three Bushes," Jane recognizes love's antinomic nature and reflects this understanding in her juxtaposition of body and soul, of the physical and spiritual, and in her acceptance of human imperfection. Having experienced only love's divisions and internal tensions that by necessity exist during life, Jane nevertheless affirms that outside time, she could attain knowledge of love's transcendent unity:

> 'What can be shown?
> What true love be?
> All could be known or shown
> If Time were but gone.'
> (VP, 510)

This is because outside time, one is released from the motion of gyres and the antinomies they enforce. As in "The Three Bushes," Yeats suggests that only after death can love's transcendent unity be fully experienced.

It is notable that, unlike "Crazy Jane and the Bishop," the resolution to the explored antinomy is directly articulated in the stanza rather than being indirectly revealed through the structural interaction of stanza and refrain. Indeed, the poem's two alternating refrains act

merely as agents of emphasis. Again, one suspects that Yeats seeks to complement and reinforce the ballad-like qualities his narrator embodies which would otherwise be undercut by her role as spokesperson for Yeats's difficult symbolic values.

Jane explores more thoroughly love's antinomies in "Crazy Jane and Jack the Journeyman," positing an image which captures the nature of its unity. She states:

> I know, although when looks meet
> I tremble to the bone,
> The more I leave the door unlatched
> The sooner love is gone,
> For love is but a skein unwound
> Between the dark and dawn. (VP, 511)

In the first four lines, Jane confesses that she desires Jack but knows availability will lead him to value her less. Through the dilemma she articulates the poem explores the tension between knowledge and action, between the contrary urgings of the heart and head, between the emotional, subjective forces of the moon and the rational, objective forces of the sun. Having suggested the contraries which pull at her being and awaken her soul, Jane explains why these contraries are animated: "For love is but a skein unwound/ Between the dark and dawn" (VP, 511).

Like the shell image in "Crazy Jane Reproved," the skein functions as a symbolic re-creation of Yeats's gyre which in this poem represents the contrary motion of love's mystical, antinomic forces. Jane's metaphor locates love's antinomies and resolution between the phases of complete subjectivity and objectivity, between night and day, between beginning and end.

Jane also uses the skein image as a metaphor for life in describing one possible form of her after-life:

A lonely ghost the ghost is
That to God shall come;
I--love's skein upon the ground,
My body in the tomb--
Shall leap into the light lost
In my mother's womb. (VP, 511)

At the moment of Jane's death, she is outside time; the skein of life is unravelled and on the ground. This signals the beginning of a spiritual rebirth which, within Platonic tradition, follows a death where the soul is pure "and drags nothing of the body with it . . . but avoids the body and gathers itself into itself. . . . [In such an instance] we have nothing else but a soul loving wisdom rightly."[28] Yeats expresses the same idea in *A Vision* where he writes:

> At death consciousness passes from *Husk* to *Spirit* . . . the *Spirit* turns from *Passionate Body* and clings to *Celestial Body* until they are one and there is only *Spirit*; pure mind, containing within itself pure truth, that which depends only upon itself. (V, 188-89)

But Jane knows that should her love for Jack remain unconsummated, she will pull part of the physical with her soul at death and haunt the phenomenal world. She asserts:

But were I left to lie alone
In an empty bed,
The skein so bound us ghost to ghost
When he turned his head
Passing on the road that night,
Mine must walk when dead. (VP, 511)

This focus on the physical is unequivocally misplaced within Platonism but not so in Jane's schema. Like a Yeatsian, Jane seeks the resolution of body and soul, not an outright denial of the physical. To Jane, soul is not imprisoned within the body but harmoniously interacts with it when the physical and spiritual aspects of love are accepted. As she states in "Crazy Jane on Day of Judgment":

'Love is all
Unsatisfied
That cannot take the whole
Body and soul.'
(VP, 510)

She perceives the physical in much the same way Yeats does when he writes: "the natural union of man and woman . . . [is] a symbol of that eternal instant where the antinomy is resolved. . . . [But it] is not the resolution itself" (V, 214). For Jane, one cannot embark on a satisfying spiritual rebirth without first resolving in life the body-soul antinomy of love. And so, should she fail to achieve this resolution, she will search for it after death, maintaining as a ghost strong physical ties to Jack.

While this poem explores the same idea as "Crazy Jane on Day of Judgment," ballad features are entirely absent. In "Crazy Jane on Day of Judgment," ballad refrains are used in a traditional manner and Jane's speech is objectively reported by a traditional narrator who focuses appropriately on narrative event. In "Crazy Jane and Jack the Journeyman," conversely, Yeats does not include a refrain and has Jane speak for herself in the form of a dramatic monologue. As in certain of the poems following "The Three Bushes," Yeats here is interested in personality, the revelation of which would be artificially interrupted by refrains and whose intensity would be eroded by the anonymity of voice and stylized use of language, symbol, and narrative characteristic of the oral ballad.

Unlike the poems which precede it in the series, "Crazy Jane on God" does not isolate the contraries in the phenomenal world but celebrates "that Whole" from which they emanate and with which they will be united. Jane begins by saying:

That lover of a night
Came when he would,
Went in the dawning light
Whether I would or no;
Men come, men go,
All things remain in God.
(VP, 512)

The ballad refrain reaffirms in each stanza that, while the particular manifestation of life is flawed and wrought with internal tensions, cumulatively life is unified and sacred.

To show the overwhelming force of unity in the universe, Jane traces the progress of the soul back to its source. The second stanza gives an instance of what Yeats terms "dreaming back" which is signaled by use of the past tense "was" in the fourth line quoted:

Banners choke the sky;
Men-at-arms tread;
Armoured horses neigh
Where the great battle was
In the narrow pass:
All things remain in God.
(VP, 512)

In Yeats's schema, should the individual fail to separate completely from the *Passionate Body* (that which constitutes his objects of sense), spirit will not find unity except after "long and perhaps painful dreams of the past" (V, 224). Yeats explains that in

> the *Dreaming Back*, the *Spirit* is compelled to live over and over again the events that had most moved it; there can be nothing new, but the old events stand forth in a light which is dim or bright according to the intensity of the passion that accompanied them. . . . In the *Return* it is compelled . . . to trace every passionate event to its cause until all are related and understood, turned into knowledge, made a part of itself. (V, 226)

The dreaming back which Yeats describes in the second stanza of "Crazy Jane on God" is spectacular due to the intensity with which the spirits

lived and recall this event.

According to Yeats, once knowledge of the past is achieved, the spirit experiences a stage called *Phantasmagoria* which exhausts emotion. The central image in stanza three of an abandoned house suddenly lit up bears an unmistakable resemblance to Yeats's assertion that during this stage "Houses appear built by thought in a moment" (V, 230). The image also figures prominently in Yeats's play *Purgatory* in which a phantom dreams back to a terrible crime committed.

Through her description of men dreaming back on their lives and seeking a oneness of spirit, Jane emphasizes the unity expressed in the poem's Platonic refrain. Even the structure of the poem's last stanza testifies to the existence of a transcendent unity so acutely sensed by Jane:

> I had wild Jack for a lover;
> Though like a road
> That men pass over
> My body makes no moan
> But sings on;
> *All things remain in God.*
> (V, 512)

The substance of this stanza is in opposition to its refrain: Jane's body acknowledges God and sings praise, not her soul. That her body could effectively assume the function of the soul provides another manifestation of the transcendent unity which is the poem's theme. And Yeats's manner of suggesting this transcendence through reliance on poetic structure is yet another expansion of the ballad genre.

In "Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop," Yeats illustrates again Jane's clarity of vision against the background of the Bishop's cultivated blindness. Jane reports in stanza one the Bishop's aggressive, critical

words to her:

> 'Those breasts are flat and fallen now,
> Those veins must soon be dry;
> Live in a heavenly mansion,
> Not in some foul sty.' (VP, 513)

The Bishop's thoughts admit of no complexity; he simply gives Jane a flat rendition of the traditional *memento mori* theme the motive for which is cruelty; indeed, the Bishop lacks any concern whatsoever for Jane's spiritual well-being. Like a Hunchback, he is able only to perceive "separated lives and actions" (V, 180). He therefore splits life's antinomies and counsels Jane to do the same, urging her to enforce an unnatural division between body and soul, between ugly and beautiful, between foul and fair.

The pronounced simplicity of the Bishop's ideas is reflected in the lack of sustained tension between his words and in their very brevity. To the Bishop, one simply chooses the "heavenly mansion" and rejects the "foul sty." He is unable to acknowledge the significance of the latter nor recognize its relationship to the "heavenly mansion."

Jane and the language she uses contrast starkly to the Bishop and his words. She rejects outright the false linguistic distinction he makes in the command "Live in a heavenly mansion,/ Not in some foul sty." Jane replies:

> 'Fair and foul are near of kin,
> And fair needs foul,' . . . .
> 'My friends are gone, but that's a truth
> Nor grave nor bed denied,
> Learned in bodily lowliness
> And in the heart's pride.' (VP, 513)

In one short stanza, Jane defiantly rejoins those antinomies which the Bishop had earlier tried to dissolve. She insists on the importance of

both body and soul, pride and humility, fair and foul. Due to her vision of the Whole, Jane understands that life's antinomies are precursors to a final unity. She says: "nothing can be sole or whole/ That has not been rent" (VP, 513).

While Jane, true to her unsophisticated nature, uses the language of a materialist she conveys a spiritual idea of transcendent unity. The prosody and quality of the words she uses are in themselves simple and crude but Jane transforms their function to suggest the esoteric and sophisticated. Through the interchange of the idea and the language appropriate to the expression of that idea, Jane insists upon life's antinomies and the unity which settles on them once resolved.

Jane performs her function as first person narrator of "Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop" in a highly traditional manner. She simply reports objectively the substance of her conversation without the intrusion of personal comment. But the poem lacks a refrain and the traditional ballad stanza and metrics. In this way Yeats continues his poetically effective technique of expressing the ideas of *A Vision* through a vivid speech which echoes but is not dominated by features of folk song.

Jane's scattered exploration of antinomies in the "Crazy Jane" series is knit together by the dance image of the last poem. For Yeats, the dance implies phenomenal tensions because it describes the motion of gyres which touch the sides of ascending and descending cones; it is this motion which Yeats terms the "horizontal dance" (V, 270). The dance between the lovers in "Crazy Jane Grown Old Looks at the Dancers" is therefore predicated on all those tensions Jane explores in the earlier poems; it acts as a dynamic symbol for one thought, one life, or one

civilization.

Jane's description of the dancers reflects the antinomies which comprise the dance:

> I found that ivory image there
> Dancing with her chosen youth,
> But when he wound her coal-black hair
> As though to strangle her, no scream
> Or bodily movement did I dare,
> Eyes under eyelids did so gleam;
> *Love is like the lion's tooth.*
> (VP, 514)

The stanza reflects the antinomic tension between scream and strangulation, appearance and reality, play and earnestness, peril and safety, the rehearsed and the spontaneous, the violent and the intense. The antinomies of stasis and motion are also implied in the dance performed by statues.

Yeats's characterization of the antinomies of life is further refined by the poem's seemingly irrelevant refrain "*Love is like the lion's tooth.*" Not only does the refrain create a ballad-like tone in the poem, it suggests at once the unpredictable and the loyal, the brutish and noble, controlled power and unharnessed destruction. The focus on danger and mystery in both stanza and refrain forges a direct link between the antinomies comprising life, described in the stanza, and those comprising love, described in the refrain. This obliquely points to a unity between life and love, paralleling Robartes's remark in *A Vision* that "Love contains all Kant's antinomies" (V, 40), and Yeats's comment that

> When my instructors see woman as man's goal and limit . . . they symbolise her as *Mask* and *Body of Fate*, object of desire and object of thought, the one a perpetual re-discovery of what the other destroys; the seventh house of the horoscope where one finds friend and enemy; and they set this double opposite in perpetual opposition to *Will* and *Creative Mind*. (V, 213)

In this schema, love is seen as founded on a series of fundamental opposites which are perpetually rediscovered and destroyed. This motion at once reflects and generates the conflict which comprises human consciousness.

The refrain and the dance image point to the paradoxical, antinomic nature of existence; the poem's structure describes its motion. Jane's narrative in stanza one ranges from the motionlessness of a statue, to the dance of a statue, to the motionlessness of Jane as she watches transfixed the intense, physically charged movement of the dancers. Stanzas two and three present the motion of the antinomy between play and earnestness, between scream and strangulation, between life and death, love and hate, male and female, illusion and reality, between beginning and end. The tension between art and life is also suggested by the movement of dancing statues in stanza one to their movement as animated beings in stanzas two and three.

Moreover, the prosody of the poem orders its antinomies into a pattern which imitates the steps of an intricate dance. What follows is the rhyme scheme of each stanza:

Stanza one	Stanza two	Stanza three
A	D	F
B	B	B
A	E	F
C	D	G
A	E	F
C	D	G
B	B	B

Notably, the rhyme scheme used in the description of the dancers in stanza one is the same pattern as the rhyming in stanza three, forging a link between Jane's affirmation of the dance of life and the participation

of the two dancers in the mysterious dance. Each stanza is united to the next by the "B" rhyme of its second line as well as repetition of the refrain. Prosody within the first stanza, for example, is ordered but not rigid. Rhymes in the first, third, and sixth lines hold together the stanza while interspersed "B" and "C" rhymes provide controlled variety.

The theme of life's dance is thus embodied on several levels: through Jane's narrative, in the motion of prosody within each stanza, in the relationship of the prosody between stanzas, as well as in the substantive relationship implied by the structural relationship between stanza and refrain. Hence, in depicting Jane's perceptions, Yeats does not rely exclusively on ballad tradition and symbol but also on poetic structures. The effect of this reliance is two-fold: first, the poetic structures help the reader to sense the mysteries of the universe which Yeats can only suggest by symbol in *A Vision*. Second, the structures are able to embody the meaning Yeats seeks to convey through symbol without the strictures of linguistic denotation.

And so, by means of poetic structure evolving from the tradition of the folk song and the oral ballad, Yeats does find, contrary to his own early evaluation, "a style and things to write about that the ballad-writers might be the better" (EI, 4).

CHAPTER THREE

SOME LATER BALLADS

In the series of poems following "The Three Bushes," in "The Three Bushes" itself, and in the "Crazy Jane" poems, Yeats articulates the ideas of *A Vision* through a poetic technique which increasingly embraces the power of folk song while gradually freeing itself from the structural and thematic limitations imposed by ballad tradition. Yeats thus develops his own ballad-like style in which narrative is secondary to the interaction of symbol and poetic structure. Indeed, the narrative thread of the "Crazy Jane" series and of the poems which follow "The Three Bushes" seems intentionally obscured in favor of character revelation designed to convey dynamically the ideas of *A Vision*.

But Yeats returns from the complexity of the "Crazy Jane" series to a more traditional version of the ballad in several of his last works though his intention remains to expound the philosophy of *A Vision*. "Long-legged Fly" (first published 1939; VP, 617), for example, is unburdened with overly esoteric allusions, and is, therefore, relatively accessible. Moreover, it contains several traditional ballad features: its stanzas are composed of two quatrains and a refrain; the last stanza consists of alternating tetrameter and trimeter lines though the metre is less uniform in the preceding stanzas; each quatrain rhymes in the traditional abcb pattern.

Yeats does not, however, posit for his readers a traditionally simple theme. His objective is no less than to evoke three images of the

heroic ideal:[1] in the first stanza Caesar is presented, in the second, Helen of Troy, and in the third, Michael Angelo. All three figures are described in their solitude, immersed in a moment of transcendence conveyed by the refrain: "*Like a long-legged fly upon the stream/ His [Her] mind moves upon silence*" (VP, 617). In short, they have escaped "those 'knots' of passion that prevent Unity of Being" (V, 16).

The captivating, distinct image of the refrain functions like that of a Zen paradox and parallels Yeats's conclusion to a section of *A Vision* entitled "The Completed Symbol":

> Passages written by Japanese monks on attaining Nirvana, and one by an Indian, run in my head. "I sit upon the side of the mountain and look at a little farm. I say to the old farmer, 'How many times have you mortgaged your farm and paid off the mortgage?' I take pleasure in the sound of the rushes." "No more does the young man come from behind the embroidered curtain amid the sweet clouds of incense; he goes among his friends, he goes among the flute-players; something very nice has happened to the young man, but he can only tell it to his sweetheart." "You ask me what is my religion and I hit you upon the mouth." "Ah! Ah! The lightening crosses the heavens, it passes from end to end of the heavens. Ah! Ah!" (V, 214-15)

For James Olney, the tranquil stream "is likened to silence as the creative, contemplative mind circumscribes and surrounds the perpetual tumble and flow, stills it to silence, and draws it into a circle where beginning and end are one."[2] The refrain, repeated after each stanza, indicates that the contemplative mind of Helen, Caesar, and Michael Angelo partakes of the mysterious knowledge which in Yeats's scheme can only be accessible to the greatest men and women of a civilization. This mysterious knowledge Yeats does not expressly articulate but rather, he casts the poem as a generic example of "a systemic unity realized (for example) in the process of a poem but

existing before and beyond it: the *eidos* of the poem."[3] As Olney explains in more detail, Yeats is

> Moving between, on the one hand, Forms that are *a priori*, eternal, unchanging and, on the other hand, forms that are slowly developing, evolving, perfecting, forms that are created by the individual and by tradition. . . . It is as if the essence of the myth we are living were apparent to us only when purely potential or when purely realized, but not in between when we are living the realization or the myth. The perfect--and perfectly abstract--patterns of Being are clogged and confused by the events of their becoming, and are apparent again only in the end when becoming has been transformed into Being.[4]

These quotations illustrate with clarity both the Platonic origins of the internal unity which Yeats's characters achieve as well as the poetic technique through which that unity is conveyed to the reader.

While Yeats only suggests the state of awareness reached by the true contemplative, by the aristocratic mind, he does describe with emblematic precision the historical role of each person named in the poem and the particular means by which that figure apprehends the transcendent knowledge related in the refrain. Caesar must prevent the collapse of a civilization by winning a crucial battle; his mind grows contemplative when "His eyes [are] fixed upon nothing,/ A hand under his head" (VP, 617). Helen must act as catalyst to the final decline of a sinking civilization; her mind grows still when she practises a "tinker shuffle" (VP, 617). But Michael Angelo has the greatest role of all; through his art, he must engender "the sexual cycles in civilizations,"[5] by ensuring "That girls at puberty may find/ The first Adam in their thought" (VP, 617). His mind achieves transcendence when "With no more sound than mice make/ His hand moves to and fro" (VP, 618). According to Harold Bloom, Yeats suggests in the final stanza that

> The greatest artist, through labor out of Unity of Being, does what the geniuses of action and love do effortlessly through abandoning their minds to the stream's movement. All the artist's discipline takes him only where nature brings a man of action [Caesar] or a great beauty [Helen]. . . . Caesar's battle may save one civilization, and Helen's love start a whole new cycle of culture, but the claim for art is more audacious.[6]

Certainly, there is an audacious quality to Yeats's belief that we gaze at the artist "in awe, because we gaze not at a work of art, but at the re-creation of the man through that art, the birth of a new species of man" (A, 273).

Yeats's profound admiration for the aristocratic mind and the transcendence it can achieve is accompanied by a bitter, undisguised disgust with the middle class. This disgust proved to be philosophical, personal, and political. On a personal level, Yeats grew to hate "the merchants, businessmen, and shopkeepers who create the commercial community" because they "substitute the lust for money and the taste for mediocrity for the standards of a former time."[7] Philosophically, Yeats disliked the middle class for its

> ill-breeding of the mind, every thought made in some manufactory and with the mark upon it of its wholesale origin--thoughts never really thought out in their current form in any individual mind, but the creation of impersonal mechanism--of schools, of text-books, of newspapers, these above all. (A, 462)

Politically, Yeats was incensed at the great power which the new monied class garnered through the workings of democracy and the concomitant opportunity to rise in political and social ranks. As a direct result, Yeats wrote works "to make, or to help some man some day to make, a feeling of exclusiveness, a bond among chosen spirits, a mystery almost for leisured and lettered people" fundamentally because Ireland had

"suffered more than England from democracy."[8]

"The Curse of Cromwell" (first published 1937; VP, 580) and "The Black Tower" (first published 1939; VP, 635) are two such works. In the former, Yeats bemoans the waning of the aristocratic order and the unmerited rise of the middle class. But while doing so, he preserves rather more ballad features than in the "Crazy Jane" series. For instance, the verse of "The Curse of Cromwell" seems awkward "until we realize that it is written for a tune's sake."[9] Structurally, the work contains a refrain which is repeated after each stanza and the poem's first person narrator is clearly a bard, the traditional speaker of the ballad. But Yeats's imitation of the traditional is by no means slavish; he does not employ the ballad quatrain, nor does he follow a traditional rhyme scheme, nor is narrative the poem's focus. As in "Long-legged Fly," Yeats attempts to capture the emotional intensity of the ballad within a distinctly philosophical and literary context.

Yeats also generates emotional intensity in his poem by invoking the tremendous hatred with which the Irish regard Cromwell, the British "protector" who in the seventeenth century led a ruthless massacre of the Irish people. It was Cromwell who later termed his attack as "a righteous judgement of God upon . . . barbarous wretches."[10] With this kind of violent callousness in mind, Yeats writes:

> You ask what I have found, and far and wide I go:
> Nothing but Cromwell's house and Cromwell's
> murderous crew,
> The lovers and the dancers are beaten into the clay,
> And the tall men and the swordsmen and the horsemen,
> where are they? (VP, 580)

But while these lines evoke the emotions surrounding the historical fact of Cromwell's murder of the Irishry, they sustain a double

meaning. As Zwerdling points out, Yeats's ideal society is "the Renaissance, and the villain who destroyed it Cromwell, a symbol in Yeats's eyes, of modern egalitarianism and its annihilation of significant distinctions among people."[11] Indeed, the historical fact of English occupation under Cromwell also represents in this poem the reign of the baseborn, the precipitation of ancient Ireland's demise and that of the aristocratic age. Ireland's nobility, the tall men and the horsemen, are beaten into clay.

The speaker in "The Curse of Cromwell" identifies himself as a bard when he says: "the swordsmen and the ladies can still keep company,/ Can pay the poet for a verse and hear the fiddle sound,/ That I am still their servant though all are underground" (VP, 581). Through lines like these, Yeats echoes "a Gaelic poet's lament for his lost masters"[12] and draws upon the close historical connection between the bard and the ancient Irish aristocrats. Edward Hayes writes that the "ancient minstrelsy" and "ancient gentry" were "the body and soul of Irish nationality; and like body and soul they departed together."[13] Of the bards specifically, Hayes writes:

> Under the rigorous enactments of Elizabeth the bards gradually declined. But the fidelity which was so characteristic of the order still distinguished them amid all their misfortunes. The gold of the treasury was laid at their feet to sing her 'Majestie's most worthie praises,' but they spurned the base bribe, and fled to the mountains. The gold of England could not make them swerve from the path of duty. From time immemorial they were the personification of Ireland's chivalry, and to this hour that chivalry has had no truer exponents than the Children of the Lyre.[14]

The loyalty and dignity of the speaker in Yeats's poem rival that of the bards whom Hayes describes. Indeed, Yeats's speaker rejects every aspect of the Cromwellian civilization and remains solidly committed

to the values of the aristocracy. He states:

> All neighbourly content and easy talk are gone,
> But there's no good complaining, for money's rant is on.
> He that's mounting up must on his neighbour mount,
> And we and all the Muses are things of no account.
> They have schooling of their own, but I pass their
> schooling by,
> What can they know that we know that know the time to die?
> (VP, 580)

And like Yeats, he laments the murderousness and destruction brought about by the Cromwellian representatives: the great ancient house of Ireland has become a ruin through which the winds howl.

While the howling wind of stanza four seems to be an image calculated to augment a tone of desolation, it is also an image of hope within the context of Yeats's cyclic view of history. As Yeats remarks in a diary:

> we wait till the world changes . . . and an hieratical [sic] society returns, power descending from the few to the many, from the subtle to the gross, not because some man's policy has decreed it but because what is so overwhelming cannot be restrained. A new beginning, a new turn of the wheel.[15]

And so, within a cyclic principle which constantly generates change, the wind foretells the toppling of a Cromwellian age and the reestablishment of order.

It is not clear, however, whether the speaker recognizes that the rule of the baseborn cannot survive forever when he states:

> But there's another knowledge that my heart destroys,
> As the fox in the old fable destroyed the Spartan boy's,
> Because it proves that things both can and cannot be;
> That the swordsmen and the ladies can still keep company,
> Can pay the poet for a verse and hear the fiddle sound,
> That I am still their servant though all are underground.
> (VP, 580-81)

Impermanence in a world of flux, suggested by the paradoxical phrase that "things can and cannot be" is what led to the demise of civilizations. Yet, while the speaker is somewhat consoled that the creative life allows him to remain servant to the ladies and swordsmen, he takes no comfort in the fact that the Cromwellian crew will also one day be underground. Indeed, the tone of each stanza is one of defiance and courage sprung from a glorious past but devoid of hope that the swordsmen will one day return.

The refrain, "*O what of that, O what of that,/ What is there left to say?*" (VP, 580), at times seems to undercut even the main speaker's defiance, enforcing a sense of despair and futility. This is certainly Yeats's own reaction, at times, to what he perceived to be the increasing power of the baseborn in Irish society. Dorothy Wellesley relates the following incident:

> One day . . . I resolved to ask him [Yeats] a number of definite questions: the treatment of Ireland by the English, the madness of Europe, the eternal problem of suffering, and the choice between Democracy which he hated, and Aristocracy which he loved. By aristocracy he meant the proud, the heroic mind. This included a furious attitude toward the cheap, the trashy, the ill-made. . . . Finally I asked . . . 'What then is your solution for all these ills?' Dropping his hand . . . upon his knee, in a gesture which to me revealed his moods of despair, he replied: 'O my dear, I have no solution, none'. (L-DW, 196)

Yeats expresses a similar notion in "Estrangement" when he writes: "The soul of Ireland has become a vapour and her body a stone" (A, 488).

Yet it is the function of the refrain, in part, to reveal and highlight what becomes the hyperbolic and destructive nature of the main speaker's disappointment and disgust. The main speaker's last two lines, "And when I pay attention I must out and walk/ Among the dogs and horses

that understand my talk" (VP, 581), reinforce such a view of the refrain by suggesting *Gulliver's Travels* and the protagonist's debilitating loathing of all humanity upon his return from the Houyhnhyms. Yeats more directly articulates this theme when he states:

> I am like the Tibetan monk who dreams at his initiation that he is eaten by a wild beast and learns on waking that he himself is eater and eaten. This is Irish hatred and solitude, the hatred of human life that made Swift write *Gulliver* and the epitaph upon his tomb, that can still make us wag between extremes and doubt our sanity. (EI, 519)

By means of the contrast between stanza and refrain, Yeats suggests that neither the poem's main speaker nor the speaker of the refrain is able to react appropriately to the presence of Cromwell's murderous crew. The speaker of the refrain is paralyzed by inaction precipitated by a loss of spirit. The main speaker is also paralyzed by inaction, born of a bitterness which can "make a stone of the heart."[16] As in "Long-legged Fly," Yeats uses ballad structures to direct the reader outside the poem for its ultimate stance. Yeats points to the space between bitterness and resignation, between an elitist, angry despair and a calm, languid acceptance of mediocrity and corruption.

"The Black Tower" is another ballad-like poem in which Yeats decries the social and political predominance of the baseborn and their medium of power, that of democracy. And while his thematic objective is multifaceted and philosophical, he nonetheless preserves the spark of simple folk song by relying on certain traditional ballad features. For example, each stanza is composed of a quatrain of tetrameter lines with the ballad abab rhyme and concludes with a rhyming couplet. A refrain accompanies each stanza. On a literal level, the narrative conveys its meaning quite clearly: it tells of loyal soldiers who await the return

of their long-absent king despite extreme hardship and temptation by enemies to give up the vigil. But beyond this, the poem seems fractured, even "obdura[te]."[17] It is, however, constructed on internal opposition and tension thereby suggesting Heraclitus's theory of life as a sustained conflict of opposites which the philosopher symbolized by warfare.[18] This insight at once locates and resolves the poem's fluid uncertainty. In short, Yeats does not identify with finality or precision the poem's warriors: these figures change with each movement of cyclic history. A poem which has as its theme this ongoing, antithetical flux must therefore sustain multiple and Protean meanings.

Certainly the cook in stanza three suggests more than his literal significance as a covert enemy who would trick the guards into defeat. Yeats writes:

> The tower's old cook that must climb and clamber
> Catching small birds in the dew of the morn
> When we hale men lie stretched in slumber
> Swears that he hears the king's great horn.
> But he's a lying hound:
> Stand we on guard oath-bound! (VP, 636)

The contrasts between cook and soldiers are many: he is old, they are hale; he must comically climb and clamber; they lie nobly stretched in slumber; he swears a false oath; they perceive his lie and remain oath-bound. The cook represents at once all that Yeats abhorred: the base-born, the weak, the false, the faithless. Indeed, as Wilson notes, "We have only to read Malory's story of Beaumains and Kay to know that the cook was the most servile functionary in a castle."[19] But the guards must contend with more than just the cook; they must also battle those banners which "come to bribe or threaten" (VP, 635). The banners not only represent "communism, with its insistence on the weakness

of the individual personality and its passion for reform and change."[20] They also simultaneously bring to mind materialism,[21] political propaganda,[22] and falsehood. The internal strength and integrity of the besieged soldiers are suggested by an abbreviated yet absolute refutation of their enemies. Of the cook, they simply state: "But he's a lying hound:/ Stand we on guard oath-bound!" (VP, 636). Of the banners, they ask in a haunting cadence: "If he [the King] died long ago/ Why do you dread us so?" (VP, 635). The guards and the tower they protect are symbols of the noble mind; they are "last survivors of the ancient heroic world,"[23] Platonic guards of "the intellective soul, by which man perceives the infinite,"[24] and Rosicrucian keepers of wisdom.[25]

That the guards will meet failure in their vigil seems to be the refrain's message, signalled by the slight modulation which the refrain undergoes with each repetition. The first line of the refrain evolves from "*There in the tomb stand the dead upright . . .*" (VP, 635), to "*There in the tomb drops the faint moonlight . . .*" (VP, 636), to "*There in the tomb the dark grows blacker*" (VP, 636). The increasing darkness not only suggests death, despair, and defeat, it represents in Yeats's scheme the dark of the moon and hence complete objectivity. Such a movement seems devoid of hope as objectivity is antithetical to the forces of the ancient order symbolized by the state of subjectivity. It would appear that the banners will come in after all.

However, if the increasing darkness is associated with Yeats's more advanced primary phases, the poem foretells that the soldiers will be successful in defending the tower. The soldiers and their ancient counterparts in the tomb can be characterized as individually approaching objectivity wherein

> a code of personal conduct . . . [is] formed from social and historical tradition. . . . All is sacrificed to this code; moral strength reaches its climax. . . . There is great humility . . . and pride as great, pride in the code's acceptance, an impersonal pride, as though one were to sign 'servant of servants'. . . . The code must rule, and because that code cannot be an intellectual choice, it is always a tradition bound up with family, or office, or trade, always a part of history. (V, 169-70)

Some critics, however, do not specifically connect the fading light in the tomb with changes taking place within the vanguards of ancient order. As a result, the immediacy of its hopeful vision remains unprobed. T. R. Henn, for example, sees the darkness in the tomb as representing "approaching death" and only by implication suggesting a concomitant rebirth of the old order, "the increasing darkness just before the dawn. . . ."[26] Bloom takes a similar position.[27]

But the moment of the king's return may be closer than these critics acknowledge. The increasing darkness of the tomb and the primary phases it symbolizes indicate that the soldiers have discipline enough to keep out the banners which seek to invade the tower. Further, this increasing darkness is accompanied by a refrain which, with each repetition, indicates that the bones are closer to full reanimation. On a literal level, the refrain refers to the ancient Gaelic custom of the heroic burial in which the bodies of honored soldiers are buried upright.[28] When the winds blow through the bones, the bones inevitably rattle. Further, the image of the shaking bones recalls Ezekiel's vision as well as a play by Yeats in which this song is sung:

> The dreaming bones cry out
> Because the night winds blow
> And heaven's a cloudy blot.
> Calamity can have its fling.
> (VP1, 768)

Unlike these bones, however, which can only dream, the bones in the tomb will be brought back to life through the winds of change and the cyclic forces of history. The resurrected soldiers of a great heroic past will, together with the oath-bound men, sweep out the banners of falsehood and welcome home the king.

Politics figure in "The Curse of Cromwell" and "The Black Tower" only in a symbolic way; the focus of each poem is philosophical and symbolic. Yeats continues to some degree this same strategy although in two of three songs contained in "Three Marching Songs" (first published 1939; VP, 613), he is considerably less cryptic, more political, and very closely aligned to ballad tradition. Even in the song which proves to be the most philosophical, Yeats's avowed thematic objective is far from complex--he simply puts "into a simple song a commendation of the rule of the able and educated, man's old delight in submission . . . ,"[29] and the resulting chaos when that rule is disobeyed. In this second song, for example, Yeats writes:

> The soldier takes pride in saluting his Captain,
> The devotee proffers a knee to his Lord,
> . . . . . .
> Great nations blossom above;
> A slave bows down to a slave. (VP, 614)

Yeats's refrain,

> *What marches through the mountain pass?*
> *No, no, my son, not yet;*
> *That is an airy spot,*
> *And no man knows what treads the grass*
> (VP, 614),

is characterized by a tone of fear and indecisiveness, an inability to act. With each repetition, the refrain appears to exert an increasing influence on the stanza. Indeed, the matter-of-fact certitude in the

first stanza becomes in the second stanza a bitterness against "rascal might" because of "The lofty innocence that it has slain" (VP, 614), to an overt confusion and crisis of confidence readily apparent in the final stanza:

> What if there's nothing up there at the top?
> Where are the captains that govern mankind?
> What tears down a tree that has nothing within it?
> A blast of the wind, O a marching wind,
> March wind, and any old tune,
> March, march, and how does it run? (VP, 615)

The first three lines of the stanza each contain a question; and while the stanza provides an answer, it does not appear to engender a sense of coherence or confidence in the speaker. Indeed, the stanza ends with another question.

The uneven metre of the stanza parallels the speaker's confusion. Notably, this final stanza breaks in line three the metric pattern established by the preceding two stanzas. Through this confusion and disorientation in both thought and expression, Yeats reveals indirectly the inheritance of a society contaminated by the rule of the baseborn.

In the third song, Yeats focuses on the personality of those leaders whom the baseborn have destroyed, by telling of an old Irish rebel hanged by the British. In this song, the refrain and stanza complement each other, depicting in traditional fashion one man's noble bravery, pride, and power of personality:

> Grandfather sang it under the gallows:
> 'Hear, gentlemen, ladies, and all mankind:
> Money is good and a girl might be better,
> But good strong blows are delights to the mind.'
> There, standing on the cart,
> He sang it from his heart.

Robbers had taken his old tambourine,
But he took down the moon
And rattled out a tune;
Robbers had taken his old tambourine.
(VP, 615-16)

This third song is full of the ideas and symbols of *A Vision*. The first stanza quoted above contains the paradoxical line "good strong blows are delights to the mind," blows which hurt the body elevate the spirit; the old rebel therefore welcomes death. The focus on the condemned man's personality, on his state of subjectivity, is represented by a central symbol in *A Vision*, the moon. The refrain which tells of robbers taking the grandfather's tambourine and the grandfather's taking down of the moon as a replacement shows that nothing his enemies can do will silence the song; they cannot suppress the expression of a noble spirit. Even at the moment of his death, the grandfather is proud and defiant and intent, possessing an aristocratic mind. As the narrator tells us, "he kicked before he died,/ He did it out of pride" (VP, 616).

But while the ideas of *A Vision* figure prominently in this song, it also has a narrative level which, unlike many of Yeats's preceding works, is accessible to all readers. The poem's speaker acts as the traditional narrator of a traditional ballad: he focuses on a centralized event in a coherent manner, tells his story dramatically, and does not offer his comments on the story. While the grandfather's philosophy that "good strong blows are delights to the mind" is somewhat peculiar if left unconnected to *A Vision*, it can be seen as a manifestation of the old man's eccentricity and his defiant nature. And one can interpret that the grandfather's taking down of the moon as characteristic of ballad exaggeration and illustrative of his determination to remain undefeated by the forces which persecute him.

In the first song, Yeats pursues a similar theme. In it he explores two extreme responses to Irish history and reveals the lies, deception, weakness, and hypocrisy of the democratic age, of the unaristocratic mind.

Yeats's speaker uses the demagogical technique of presenting the sacrifice of nationalists in order to incite the audience with continued hate for the defeated British enemy. The speaker concludes that should the people fail to remember those who gave their lives in the fight for Irish independence

> . . . history turns into rubbish,
> All that great past to a trouble of fools;
> Those that come after shall mock at O'Donnell,
> Mock at the memory of both O'Neills,
> Mock Emmet, mock Parnell,
> All the renown that fell. (VP, 614)

That is, the Irish victory will be empty and hollow should the public not remember the sacrifice of the rebel heroes.

The fanaticism of the speaker is emphasized by the repetition and metrics of the following stanza:

> Remember all those renowned generations,
> Remember all that have sunk in their blood,
> Remember all that have died on the scaffold,
> Remember all that have fled, that have stood,
> Stood, took death like a tune
> On an old tambourine. (VP, 613)

The phrase "Remember all" begins four of the stanza's six lines, the metrics of which require a heavy stress on both words. These same lines are constructed on a nearly identical prosody, adding emphasis and producing a virtual chant which is not broken until the fifth line. The stanza contains three vivid images of death intended by the speaker to produce a deep, nationalistic response to the sacrifice of Irish

revolutionaries. The stanza is particularly unsettling due to its insistent focus on violent death and the repetition of imperatives. It therefore contrasts brutally with the song's refrain which follows:

> *Be still, be still, what can be said?*
> *My father sang that song,*
> *But time amends old wrong,*
> *And all that's finished, let it fade.*
> (VP, 613)

The refrain seeks to soothe, not incite. The "s" sound in the words "still," "said," "sang," and "song" heighten its gentleness. The repeated unvoiced "f" sound in "finished" and "fade" emphasize the refrain's call not to relive past wrongs because the emotions which they bring forth are pointlessly destructive. This echoes Yeats's assertion that "In politics I have but one passion and one thought, rancour against all who, except under the most dire necessity, disturb public order."[30] The difference is that, unlike the speaker in the refrain, Yeats provides a caveat to his condemnation of the violence and fanaticism which unnecessarily incite disorder "like some old bullet imbedded in the flesh."[31] In short, Yeats acknowledges the exceptions which arise in "dire necessity."

Thus, neither the attitude of the resolute fanatic, expressed in the stanzas, nor the placidity of the passivist, presented in the refrain, is accepted by Yeats. The solution to Ireland's political ills lies between these two antinomies, in the ability to meet each situation with an appropriate response. In this way, Yeats resolves through the space between stanza and refrain the antinomies of "violence at any price" and "peace at any price," of fanaticism and passivity, of the deepest hatred and the most naive tolerance.

In all three songs Yeats echoes certain traits of a particular sub-genre of the Irish ballad, the political street ballad. Its influence is strikingly evident in the first song. Like the traditional speaker, the narrator of the first song converts historical events into "two-dimensional pictures, foreshortened and distorted by partisan spirit" (S, 10). The narrator uses the song as political propaganda and relies on "sensationalism in appealing to basic emotions, in a simple text" (S, 9). But regardless of the similarities which these songs bear to tradition, Yeats's focus throughout is distinctly philosophical. In his indirect expression of rage against the baseborn and veneration of the aristocratic ideal, Yeats relies on the political song, just as he relied on the features of folk song in "The Three Bushes." He thus is able to convey his ideas within the living tradition of the ballad and the poetic energy it embodies.

It should be noted, however, that some of Yeats's late ballads are enough removed from his philosophy that he can justly be described as "one of the most illustrious and unexpected recruits for Irish ballad-writing" (S, 83). The impetus to write traditional ballads with a political theme appears to be multifaceted. As discussed earlier, Yeats was disgusted with the rise of democracy and the perceived weakness in society thus generated. This disgust is connected to his increasing hatred of the British, despite Ireland's having received home rule and his own role as an appointed senator in the Irish Free State. Yeats's contempt for England puzzled Dorothy Wellesley until she discovered that it arose due to the enfeebled quality which, to Yeats's mind, characterized Britain's attitude to Ireland in the twentieth century (L-DW, 195). Moreover, Yeats was afraid that in his old age he was losing the poetic

energy vital to his work, that he "had grown too old for poetry" (VP1, 1309). The following quotation seems to show Yeats focusing on the political fact of Irish persecution as a means of arousing his emotions, as a catalyst to poetic energy:

> The 'Irishry' have preserved their ancient 'deposit' through wars which, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, became wars of extermination; no people, Lecky said at the opening of his *Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, have undergone greater persecution, nor did that persecution altogether cease up to our own day. No people hate as we do in whom that past is always alive, there are moments when hatred poisons my life and I accuse myself of effeminacy because I have not given it adequate expression. It is not enough to have put it into the mouth of a rambling peasant poet. (EI, 518-19)

And though this kind of frenzy caused Yeats to make hasty evaluations which damaged the reputation of innocent people[32] in his mind the price was not too high:

> You think it horrible that Lust and Rage
> Should dance attendance upon my old age.
> They were not such a plague when I was young.
> What else have I to spur me into song?[33]

And finally, Yeats's focus on the political street ballad reflects his wish to recapture tradition and simplicity (S, 83-84). Indeed, through the ballad, Yeats hoped to touch "the emotion of multitude" (EI, 215); he was convinced that

> Elaborate modern psychology sounds egotistical . . . when it speaks in the first person, but not those simple emotions which resemble the more, the more powerful they are, everybody's emotion. . . . (A, 151)

Yeats's choice of the political ballad as a means through which to touch the basic emotions of his audience is a proven method. As Thomas Davis writes in the Preface to the first edition of *The Spirit of*

the Nation, a collection of political ballads which had been published in *The Nation* newspaper since 1892:

> Music is the first faculty of the Irish, and scarcely anything has such power for good over them. The use of this faculty and this power, publicly and constantly, to keep up their spirits, refine their tastes, warm their courage, increase their union, and renew their zeal, is the duty of every patriot. . . . Will not the temperance bands learn to play these airs, and the young men, ay, and the young women, learn to sing our songs, and chorus them till village and valley ring? If they do . . . [this book will have] entered into the heart of Ireland, for good and for ever.[34]

Hence, however much Yeats may regret the inadequacy of his expression, it is certainly appropriate that his poems are sung by "a rambling peasant poet," by Red Hanrahan, the venerable bard whom Yeats describes with a distinctly Platonic echo as caught "by an old man's juggleries . . . ," a poet who "stumbled, tumbled, fumbled to and fro" (VP, 411). Through Hanrahan, Yeats as artist takes up the patriot's challenge and chooses for himself a wide audience.

* * *

Yeats effectively arouses "the emotion of multitude," not to mention his own, upon learning of the Casement forgeries. Roger Casement, an Irish Volunteer, was in 1916 sentenced to death for treason. The Irish call for his reprieve never occurred because diaries, allegedly written by Casement, revealed him to be "a 'Degenerate'" (L, 867). When it came to light twenty years later that these diaries had been forged, Yeats was infuriated. Of the ballad which was the product of this rage, Yeats writes: "I sent off a ferocious ballad written to a popular tune, to a newspaper. . . . I shall not be happy until I hear that it is sung by Irish undergraduates at Oxford" (L, 868). Yeats's ballad, "Roger

Casement" (first published 1937; VP, 581), thus parallels a topical broadside, the traditional purpose of which is to "spread the news of current events, and at the same time to give partisan or moralizing comments" (S, 97). The exhortation in the Irish topical ballad tends to be of more importance than in its English counterpart, according to Georges-Denis Zimmermann (S, 98). Clearly, it constitutes a large part of Yeats's poem:

> Come Tom and Dick, come all the troop
> That cried it far and wide,
> Come from the forger and his desk,
> Desert the perjurer's side;
>
> Come speak your bit in public
> That some amends be made
> To this most gallant gentleman
> That is in quicklime laid. (VP, 582)

In describing the topical broadside, Zimmermann notes the importance of historical detail in street ballads like "The Smashing of the Van":

> precision of date is considered important; names of persons and places abound, perhaps because a series of them can have some harmonic or evocative quality. They were also needed to fill up the line, or helped to attest the reality of the whole story. (S, 98)

Initially, Yeats's ballad did contain the names of men who figured in the Casement scandal but in the poem's revised edition, only Ambassador Spring Rice is identified. The name of Alfred Noyles, for example, was deleted after Noyles wrote a disclaimer to the *Irish Press* (C, 468-69).

Notably, Yeats says that his ballad should be sung; thereby suggesting that its structure conforms to the rhythms of music. And in continuance of his imitation of the general ballad style, Yeats's stanzas are composed of quatrains rhyming abcb or abab. But Yeats is not completely governed by convention. He does not employ the prosody of the

traditional Irish broadside which generally includes internal correspondences[35] nor do the lines of his poem consistently follow the construction of the Gaelic dialect. Most importantly, Yeats's ballad reflects his literary expertise and sense of drama. Hence, "Roger Casement" is unlike the majority of Irish political street ballads whose narratives are "mere metrical journalism" (S, 98) and whose stories are told undramatically (S, 98). As in "Down by the Salley Gardens," Yeats is not interested in the esoteric interaction of opposites characteristic of ballad-like poems based on *A Vision*, but in simple juxtaposition through which the ballad's emotional impact and intrigue are augmented, albeit on a more sophisticated level. "Roger Casement" focuses on the contrast between what is old and what is new, between what is authentic and what is forged, between truth and falsehood, on the wrong done to Casement and the making of amends.

The strong public appeal of this ballad testifies to its patriotic and emotional success. On the morning it was published in the newspaper, Dubliners showed great deference to Yeats's wife while she was out shopping (L-DW, 138). Yeats was publicly thanked by several politically prominent figures, including "our chief antiquarian & an old revolutionist, Count Plunket, who calls my poem 'a ballad the people much needed'" (L-DW, 138).

In his second ballad on the Casement forgeries, Yeats's objective is not simply to clear Casement's good name. In "The Ghost of Roger Casement" (first published 1938; VP, 583), he seeks to convey the larger implications of the treachery which sent an Irish hero to the gallows. Yeats writes:

> I am fighting in those ballads [the Casement ballads] for what I have been fighting all my life, it is our Irish fight though it has nothing to do with this or that country. . . . When somebody talks of justice, who knows that justice is accompanied by secret forgery, when an archbishop wants a man to go to the communion table, when that man says he is not spiritually fit, when we remember our age old quarrel against gold-brayed and ermine & that our ancestor Swift has gone where 'fierce indignation can lacerate his heart no more', & we go stark, staring mad. (L-DW, 126)

Yeats is infuriated by those who hypocritically uphold values or who present themselves as other than they are. Such people create situations where injustice masquerades as due process and spiritually empty forms mime religious ceremony. In "The Ghost of Roger Casement" Yeats presents this kind of hypocrisy through the character of John Bull. Though Bull presents himself as the protector and guardian of Ireland, each stanza reveals the covert deception upon which this image is based: the reader thus detects a contradiction between who Bull is and who he presents himself to be. Through Bull's rhetoric, the speaker's punning, partisan comments like "John Bull has stood for Parliament,/ A dog must have his day," and through the refrain, Yeats heightens the reader's outrage at Bull's fraud and hence advances his larger battle against the lies, hypocrisy, and deceit which make us go "stark, staring mad."

In the ballad, Yeats uses the dramatic technique of question and answer in order to contrast the character of Bull, who appears only in each stanza, with the character of Roger Casement, who is named only in the refrain. In the first stanza Yeats writes:

> O what has made that sudden noise?
> What on the threshold stands?
> It never crossed the sea because
> John Bull and the sea are friends;
> But this is not the old sea
> Nor this the old seashore.
> What gave that roar of mockery,

That roar in the sea's roar?
The ghost of Roger Casement
Is beating on the door.
(VP, 583)

The sudden noise is revealed in the refrain to be the ghost of Roger Casement, symbol of those who fight the colonial forces of the old sea and its friend, John Bull. The sea, once controlled by England, now belongs to the Irish State; it thus acts as a vehicle for and partner to Casement's protest. John Bull, conversely, who shares the traditional nickname for Great Britain, represents colonial interests and seeks to present British authority in Ireland as a source of security and well-being for the Irish:

John Bull has stood for Parliament,
A dog must have his day,
The country thinks no end of him,
For he knows how to say,
At a beanfeast or a banquet,
That all must hang their trust
Upon the British Empire
Upon the Church of Christ.
The ghost of Roger Casement
Is beating on the door. (VP, 583)

Though Bull adopts the stance of a protector, the stanza reveals him to be an oppressor. First, the imperative of line six shows that Bull has not invited the Irish to trust Church and Empire, he has commanded them to do so. Second, the phrase "for he knows how to say" suggests that Bull simply mouths words calculated to persuade, that his utterances are devoid of sincerity. Third, Bull's conception of trust is reductive and superficial. In saying that "all must hang their trust," Bull suggests that trust is an inconsequential possession that one deals with like a hat. He thus provides a mechanistic formula for its placement.

Yet more of Bull's hypocritical qualities are revealed in the

third stanza wherein Bull is shown as misusing not only language, but history, and the tenets of traditional wisdom as well:

> John Bull has gone to India
> And all must pay him heed,
> For histories are there to prove
> That none of another breed
> Has had a like inheritance,
> Or sucked such milk as he,
> And there's no luck about a house
> If it lack honesty.
> *The ghost of Roger Casement*
> *Is beating on the door.* (VP, 583-84)

The imperative in line two indicates that the respect given to Bull is demanded, not earned. History is manipulated by Bull to ensure that the colonized people perceive him as rightly being in a position of authority. This manipulation creates a tension between history as a record of the past and history as a tool of propaganda. The stanza also posits a tension between the accumulation of personal wealth and its stated source. Bull's ill-gotten colonial plunder is recast as the legitimate product of luck which hangs about an honest house, thus making a mockery of folk wisdom.

Yeats's refrain "*The ghost of Roger Casement/ Is beating on the door*," acts as a dramatic declaration of and ironic contrast to Bull's fraud. Tension is created between Bull's misuse of language, reason, history, and folk wisdom and Casement's insistent perception and revelation of that misuse; between a rhetoric which in the stanza demands passive obedience and acceptance and the refrain's unstated call to action, defiance, and protest.

In the final stanza, the first person narrator returns to the fundamental contradictions in the historical event, what history records, and what in fact is important. The speaker concludes:

But fame and virtue rot.
Draw round, beloved and bitter men,
Draw round and raise a shout;
The ghost of Roger Casement
Is beating on the door. (VP, 584)

For the first time, the transition between stanza and refrain is marked by a semi-colon rather than by a period or question mark. This use of punctuation creates a direct relationship between the call for a shout in the stanza and the beating on the door by Casement's ghost. The two sounds join together to produce a united protest of Bull's deception. The refrain is thus given an important, untraditional function by Yeats which heightens ballad drama. It directs the movement of the poem from the question "O what has made that sudden noise?" to knowledge that Casement's ghost is responsible, to an understanding of why Casement is beating on the door, to an acceptance of the ghost's call to action. This process is paralleled by the unmasking of Bull through his own rhetoric, through the narrator's critical comments, through Casement's ghost beating on the door, and through the poem's very structure which insists, by means of the specialized content of stanza and refrain, on an opposition between Casement and Bull.

Clearly then, Yeats does not rely exclusively on ballad tradition to generate in his audience a deeply emotional and patriotic response to the betrayal of Casement. Indeed, while narrative is centralized, simple, and dramatic and while each stanza is composed of two conventional quatrains and a refrain, the ballad's unmistakable sophistication takes it out of the realm of folk song. But though the ballad is sophisticated, it is not esoteric as are poems with themes solely derived from *A Vision*. In short, Yeats's objective in "The Ghost of Roger Casement" is not to present philosophy but to fight a practical

battle against the concrete forces of treachery, deception, and lies.

"Come Gather round Me, Parnellites" (first published 1937; VP, 586) is another of Yeats's poems in the same political vein as the Casement ballads. It is also one of his most traditional.[36] Each stanza rhymes abcbdefe and is composed of two quatrains. The first stanza has an entirely traditional metre of alternating tetrameter and trimeter lines. The poem even begins with a call for the audience's attention, which is characteristic of the Irish broadside ballad:

> Come gather round me, Parnellites,
> And praise our chosen man;
> Stand upright on your legs awhile,
> Stand upright while you can,
> For soon we lie where he is laid,
> And he is underground;
> Come fill up all those glasses
> And pass the bottle round.
> (VP, 586)

Yeats wrote "Come Gather round Me, Parnellites" because of his conviction that Parnell was a victim of the newspapers, Church, and party, a sentiment readily apparent in Yeats's assertion that the book *Parnell Vindicated* proves

> beyond controversy that when Parnell met her, Mrs. O'Shea was 'a free woman'; that while a rich old woman lived she could not seek divorce; that Captain O'Shea knew of their liaison from the first; that he sold his wife for money and for other substantial advantages; that for £20,000, could Parnell have raised that sum, he was ready to let the divorce proceedings go, not against Parnell, but himself; that he extracted money from Parnell and Parnell's widow; that a well-known book signed by her, but only here and there her work, whenever it put him in a better light was 'forgery . . . no less hurtful to Parnell's honour' than the Piggot Letters; that the Irish leaders knew all about the liaison after a certain election in the middle 'eighties if not sooner; that the Liberal leaders knew from May 1882, when Sir William Harcourt told the Cabinet, apparently upon the evidence of his detectives. . . . But all were caught in that public insincerity which was about to bring such discredit upon democracy. (EI, 486-88)

Yeats's objective in his ballad is to arouse in the audience a patriotic loyalty to Parnell and outrage against those who betrayed him. By describing Parnell's loyalty, devotion, and patriotism, Yeats points to the dishonor of those who deserted Parnell and indirectly condemns their infidelity. And by suggesting that Parnell's love for "his lass" is also a reason for toasting his memory, Yeats challenges the widely held public opinion that Parnell's immorality quite rightly resulted in his political demise.

Notably, it is only in the last stanza that the narrator even mentions those who would disagree with this estimation of Parnell:

> The Bishops and the Party
> That tragic story made,
> A husband that had sold his wife
> And after that betrayed;
> But stories that live longest
> Are sung above the glass,
> And Parnell loved his country,
> And Parnell loved his lass.
> (VP, 587)

Again indirectly, the speaker suggests that two versions of the Parnell affair exist, one by the people of Ireland who sing it above "the glass," the other by self-serving and disloyal churchmen and politicians.

Yeats clearly uses this ballad as a medium of protest against the opportunistic and insincere qualities of the unscrupulous public figure; through the poem he expresses an implicit outrage that the victim of such despicable qualities is a fine and proud Irishman. Yeats's narrative perspective lends his ballad the power of fierce emotion and wide appeal. Certainly this is the poet's own estimation of his work when in 1937 he writes: "I write poem after poem, all intended for music, all very simple. . . . I have recovered a power of moving the common man

I had in my youth. The poems I can write now will go into the general memory" (L-DW, 135).

Yeats continues his focus on arousing basic emotions even in poems whose seemingly irrelevant refrain brings to mind the "Crazy Jane" series and hence the ideas of *A Vision* on which it is based. "The O'Rahilly" (first published 1938; VP, 584), for example, is a relatively traditional ballad the narrative of which is based on the historical event of a rebel's death in the Easter 1916 uprising. Each stanza is comprised of two quatrains both of which follow the traditional pattern of alternating four and three stressed lines. The stanzas rhyme either abcb or abab though this pattern is broken in the last two stanzas. Yeats even uses the occasional convention for imitation of Gaelic in the poem. For instance, in the lines "He told Pearse and Connolly/ He'd gone to great expense," Yeats imitates Gaelic dialect by omitting the conjunction "that."[37] So successful is Yeats's imitation that to Henn, the poem constitutes the first time he achieves "true colloquial speech."[38]

Henn also notes in his analysis the Protean qualities of the ballad's refrain "*How goes the weather?*":

> It is part questioning, part ironic, part a sort of chorus to move the action outside reality. It means in effect, *What of the Rising? What is going on in the day-to-day world of the farmer, the huntsman, or sailor?*--the background of the war; and perhaps, *What is the news of happenings in the world beyond these?*[39]

While Henn's explanation of possible meanings conveyed by the refrain is quite exhaustive, he does not note the flippancy it suggests, perhaps the poem's most thematically crucial meaning. Indeed, Yeats's objective in "The O'Rahilly" is to do more than pay a traditional tribute to a brave revolutionary. Yeats reveals through the simple juxtaposition of poetic

structures the fundamental tensions underlying the ballad narrative and points to the poem's larger theme. The stark contrast in each stanza, which tells of a man's dedicated valor, being countered by an irreverent, irrelevant question in the refrain, suggests the bitter irony in a story which bears telling and the public lack of interest in that story, between the personal significance of an event and the insignificance that society attributes to it, between a monumental sacrifice made and the ingratitude with which that sacrifice is regarded, between the ultimate act of a nationalist and the nation's refusal to value or acknowledge that act, between an event which demands an emotional, patriotic response and the lack of that response. All these tensions are conveyed in the last stanza, which reads:

> What remains to sing about
> But of the death he met
> Stretched under a doorway
> Somewhere off Henry Street;
> They that found him found upon
> The door above his head
> 'Here died the O'Rahilly
> R.I.P.' writ in blood.
> *How goes the weather?*
> (VP, 585)

The refrain's brutality hits a climax in this, its final repetition, as the nature of O'Rahilly's sacrifice becomes a matter of public record, both through the writing in blood and the poet's ballad.

Yeats thus deals not so much with the intricate philosophical concepts and symbolic values discussed in *A Vision* as the frustrating historical contradictions which emerge in the telling of a rebel's death. By showing how the memory of O'Rahilly has been slighted, Yeats appeals to the understanding of people unschooled in his philosophy and hence involves emotionally a much wider audience than in the "Crazy Jane" poems

or even "Long-legged Fly." The emotive impact of the poem is large because in it Yeats appeals to nationalism on one level and on another level to the people's sense of duty to set right the vexing contradictions presented. And Yeats accomplishes this task with formidable success by combining the accessible tools and subject matter of the political ballad with the literary precision and polish of a skilled poet.

However dramatic and intense the emotional appeal of poems like "The O'Rahilly" and "The Ghost of Roger Casement," one would not term them fundamentally mysterious. But Yeats's fascination with the notion of transcendent knowledge would never wane and this perhaps explains why he was very much taken with the effect of "Colonel Martin" (first published 1937; VP, 594), one of his last ballads. Describing it as "among the best things, almost the strangest thing I have written" (L-DW, 158), Yeats asserts that the ballad has a

> curious pathos which I cannot define. I have known from the start what I wanted to do, and yet the idea seemed to lie below the threshold of consciousness--and still lies. There is a chorus almost without meaning, followed by concertina and whistle. (L, 896-97)

At the same time, the poem constitutes one of Yeats's more traditional ballads, as noted by T. R. Henn in his remark that it

> is perfectly adapted to the narrative qualities of the Irish street-ballad: it allows for dramatic emphasis, for dialogue in character, even to the *tournoure de phrase* suited to the social rank of each speaker; it has a little of the rapidity of movement, and of artistic inconsequentiality of the true ballad.[40]

Other traditional features of "Colonel Martin" include stanzas which consist for the most part of alternating tetrameter and trimeter lines, the first four of which rhyme abcb, as well as a refrain the nonsensical nature of which produces an

incantatory effect, as in "The Elfin Knight."[41] In short, the refrain contributes to the ballad's "curious pathos" and tone which become more unsettling with each repetition of the refrain.

Tone and pathos are further emphasized by the poem's sudden and even unsatisfying dénouement. But ending a ballad in this way does not constitute a break with convention. Version "A" of "The Twa Sisters," for example, is similar to "Colonel Martin" in that it abruptly concludes just where one would expect narrative to continue. The ballad concerns the treachery of a princess who pushes her younger sibling into the sea, drowning her. A miller later pulls out the young sister's body and uses her breast-bone, fingers, veins, and nose-ridge to make "a violl to play there upon." In the last four stanzas, the violin does the unexpected when taken to the palace:

> Then bespake the treble string,
> With a hie downe downe a downe-a
> 'O yonder is my father the king.'
> With a hy downe downe a downe-a
>
> Then bespake the second string,
> . . . . . .
> 'O yonder sitts my mother the queen.'
> . . . . . .
>
> And then bespake the strings all three,
> . . . . . .
> 'O yonder is my sister that drowned mee.'
> . . . . . .
>
> 'Now pay the miller for his payne,
> . . . . . .
> And let him bee gone in the divel's name.'[42]
> . . . . . .

While up until this point, the ballad exhibits narrative unity and coherence, it is difficult to understand why the miller is cursed by the drowned sister when it is through his agency that the crime is revealed.

Moreover, one would expect a final stanza telling of the older sister's remorse over the hideous deed she committed, or of her punishment, or at the very least, an explanation of her motive. But like Yeats's ballad, "The Twa Sisters" ends suddenly, exhibiting a peculiar narrative resolution.

Certainly, the ending of "Colonel Martin," in conjunction with its essentially irrelevant refrain, contributes to the ballad's curious pathos and strangeness upon which Yeats remarked. But the fundamental reason for the ballad's distinctive qualities arises from the poem's source and the reason why Yeats composed a ballad which draws so closely upon it. In Yeats's 1910 lecture on Irish theatre and art, the poet provides an important background to "Colonel Martin," telling his audience that he first heard the tale from two old peasants.

> It had been remembered for *three* generations merely because the human life in it was interesting. I believe that eleven grand jurors in the county of Galway got their death by famine fever--attending fever cases in the cottages. They are forgotten, but *men who served less are remembered for ever because of what they were in themselves*. . . . [In "Colonel Martin"] you have the kind of thing that created the Odyssey--the delight in human nature because it is a strange, passionate thing.[43]

This same discovery is conveyed in "Under Ben Bulben" (first published 1939; VP, 636), one of Yeats's last works and clearly a summary of his poetic wisdom. He writes

> Irish poets, learn your trade,
> Sing whatever is well made,
> Scorn the sort now growing up
> All out of shape from toe to top,
> Their unremembering hearts and heads
> Base-born products of base beds.
> Sing the peasantry, and then
> Hard-riding country gentlemen,
> The holiness of monks and after
> Porter-drinkers' randy laughter;

> Sing the lords and ladies gay
> That were beaten into the clay
> Through seven heroic centuries;
> Cast your mind on other days
> That we in coming days may be
> Still the indomitable Irishry.
> (VP, 639-40)

Yeats describes in this stanza the diverse, elemental, and qualitative factors which lend to works like "Colonel Martin" their intense and powerful appeal. Indeed, both in this stanza, and in his 1910 lecture quoted earlier, Yeats emphatically chooses the ballad without naming it. Further, he insightfully encapsulates the quality of the ballad which endures from century to century. In short, the ballad speaks to all people about human nature; because its roots lie in the folk community, the ballad embraces a subject matter as diverse and unadorned as basic human experience. It is the accompanying emotional power and elemental intensity, as Yeats discovers, that enables great bards like Red Hanrahan to move his audience to tears.

First and foremost, the ballad is part of a great tradition which is inclusive and universally accessible. Surprisingly enough, it was these features above all others which Yeats, by the end of his life, seemed to value most. He writes in 1938:

> There has been an article upon my work in the *Yale Review*, which is the only article on the subject which has not bored me for years. It commends me above other modern poets because my language is 'public'. That word which I had not thought of myself is a word I want. (L-DW, 179)

In wanting the word "public" for himself, Yeats decides not to cast himself exclusively as the Platonist who wrote *A Vision*. He does not choose as his primary role that of the esoteric poet who composed the complex "Crazy Jane" poems, a series which carried with it only the

vaguest echo of folk song. He is not solely content with his position as the intellectual composer of "Three Marching Songs" who manipulated ballad structures in the interests of thematic development but would not embrace fully the ballad tradition. And, of course, Yeats remains firm in his rejection of the sentimentalist who only mimicked traditional ballad features as in "The Stolen Child," and produced poems filled with a "too soft simplicity." Yeats chooses for himself, perhaps more fully and with more pride than any other role, that of the bard. It can be no surprise then that the language which gave him the most personal satisfaction was ultimately a public one. It is equally appropriate that the audience to whom he spoke with the greatest intensity was not mystics, or pedagogues, or philosophers, but rather all of Irishry.

NOTES

Chapter One

[1]According to Thomas R. Whitaker, *Swan and Shadow: Yeats's Dialogue with History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1964), p. 195, Yeats bases the character of Red Hanrahan on the Irish peasant poet Eoghan Ruadh Ó Suileabháin.

In "W. B. Yeats and Irish Folk Song," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, 30 (1966), 155, Michael Yeats writes that Eoghan Ruadh Ó Súilleabháin lived from 1748 to 1784 and was "perhaps the greatest of the 18th century Gaelic poets."

[2]Francis B. Gummere, *The Popular Ballad* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1907), p. 304.

[3]M. J. C. Hodgart, *The Ballads*, 2nd ed. (1950; rpt. London: Hutchinson and Co., 1962), p. 34.

[4]Michael Yeats, 158.

[5]Jeffares (C, 14) notes the similarities between Yeats's poem and the Anglo-Irish broadside ballad "The Rambling Boys of Pleasure." Yeats's poem also resembles A. E. Housman's "When I was one-and-twenty," particularly in the tight narrative tension between the concluding lines of the two stanzas. Notably, Housman's ballad was published in 1896, seven years after that of Yeats. See A. E. Housman, *A Shropshire Lad* (London: Richards Press, 1930), pp. 20-21.

[6]Michael Yeats, 159. Michael Yeats acknowledges, 158, footnote 17, his source as P. J. McCall's manuscript Ballad Collection in the National Library, Dublin.

[7]The term ballad quatrain, ballad stanza, or ballad metre usually refers to a four-line stanza "containing alternating four-stress and three-stress lines. The rhyme scheme is usually abcb; sometimes abab," according to J. A. Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (1977; rev. ed., London: Andre Deutsch, 1979), p. 73.

[8]Gerould (B, 127-28) notes that four of Child's ballads seem to be based on hexameter lines rhyming in couplets.

[9]M.J.C. Hodgart, p. 75, defines the Lais as "short narrative poems based as a rule, on a single incident. They are of Breton origin and are full of Celtic folklore." Hodgart also notes, p. 76, that it is

not always possible to decide whether "the ballad derived directly from the Lai, or whether both have a common source in folklore."

[10]W. B. Yeats's note to "The Stolen Child" (VP, 797).

[11]Yeats uses this phrase in the story "Kidnappers" to describe fairies who glamor and steal away a young bride (M, 73).

[12]Hodgart, p. 116.

[13]Helen Child Sargent and George Lyman Kittredge, eds., *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1904), p. 22.

[14]Gertrude Jobes, *Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols* (New York: The Scarecrow Press, 1961), p. 249.

[15]Yeats, quoted by Albert B. Friedman in *The Ballad Revival: Studies in the Influence of Popular on Sophisticated Poetry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 331.

[16]W. B. Yeats, in his note to the poem (VP, 806). Yeats also claims that his poem was inspired by a Greek folk song.

[17]Alfred Tennyson, "The Hesperides," in Lionel Trilling and Harold Bloom, eds., *Victorian Prose and Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 403-06.

[18]James Olney, "The Esoteric Flower: Yeats and Jung," in *Yeats and the Occult*, ed. George Mills Harper, Yeats Studies Series (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1975), p. 53.

[19]James Olney, p. 52.

[20]Richard Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats* (London: MacMillan, 1954), p. 251.

[21]J. H. Natterstad, "Yeats' 'The Cap and Bells,'" *Explicator*, 25 (1967), item 75.

[22]Harold Bloom, *Yeats* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 129.

[23]Yeats writes ballads at this time which have a traditional focus on Irish folklore, as in "The Withering of the Boughs," and on the theme of love, as in "The Ragged Wood."

[24]W. B. Yeats, in Joseph Ronsley, "Yeats's Lecture Notes for 'Friends of My Youth,'" in Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds, eds., *Yeats and the Theatre*, for Yeats Studies Series (Canada: MacMillan Company of Canada Limited; U.S.A.: MacLean-Hunter Press, 1975), p. 69.

[25]Robert O'Driscoll, "Critical Introduction" to "Yeats on Personality: Three Unpublished Lectures," in *Yeats and the Theatre*, p. 13.

Chapter Two

[1]Donald Pearce, "Philosophy and Phantasy: Notes on the Growth of Yeats's 'System,'" *University of Kansas City Review*, 18 (1952), 173.

[2]Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* (1948; rpt. New York: W. W. Norton, 1978, 1979), p. 77.

[3]Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: The Man and the Masks*, p. 99.

[4]Mary Catherine Flannery, *Yeats and Magic: The Earlier Works*, Irish Literary Studies 2 (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1977), p. 43.

[5]Pearce, 169.

[6]Porphyry, "Concerning the Cave of the Nymphs," trans., Thomas Taylor, in *Thomas Taylor the Platonist: Selected Writings*, eds., Kathleen Raine and George Mills Harper (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 318-19. Yeats notes in V, 19 that he read Thomas Taylor's *Plotinus*.

[7]Thomas Taylor, "Introduction to 'The Fable of Cupid and Psyche,'" p. 431.

[8]Taylor, p. 431.

[9]Northrop Frye, *Fables of Identity: Studies in Poetic Mythology* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963), p. 224.

[10]Frye, p. 224.

[11]Taylor, p. 163.

[12]Plato, *Phaedo*, in *Great Dialogues of Plato*, eds., Eric H. Warmington and Philip G. Rouse, trans., W. H. D. Rouse (New York: New American Library Inc., 1956), pp. 469-70.

[13]Kathleen Raine, "Thomas Taylor in England," in *Thomas Taylor the Platonist: Selected Writings*, p. 12.

[14]Sir David Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 21.

[15]Thomas Taylor, "Advertisement" to "A Dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries," in *Thomas Taylor the Platonist: Selected Writings*, p. 345.

[16]Frye, p. 236.

[17]Yeats in the note after the title of the poem (VP, 569). But this is not the only source of Yeats's ballad. As Jeffares notes (C, 445), the poem is based on a ballad by Dorothy Wellesley.

[18]Matthew Hodgart, ed., *The Faber Book of Ballads* (London: Faber & Faber, 1965), p. 237.

[19]Barbara Seward, *The Symbolic Rose* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 115.

[20]Seward, p. 115.

[21]Yeats writes that while "The Lady's First Song" is not particularly good in itself "it will heighten the drama [of "The Three Bushes"] (L-DW, 115).

[22]Plato, *Phaedo*, p. 484.

[23]The notion of the rose's sacred, spiritual qualities is reflected in Dante's vision of heaven as a rose enveloping a space of "ample radiance" in *The Divine Comedy*, "Paradise," Canto XXX, in *Dante: The Divine Comedy*, Francis Cary, trans. (London: Ebeling Publishing, 1982), p. 452, and in the rose as the flower of the Virgin Mary.

[24]T. R. Henn, *The Lonely Tower: Studies in the Poetry of W. B. Yeats*, 2nd ed. (1950; rev. ed., London: Methuen & Co., 1965), p. 104.

[25]Yeats (V, 72) quoting Blake.

[26]Hodgart, *The Ballads*, p. 166, footnote 3.

[27]Hodgart, *The Ballads*, p. 32.

[28]Plato, *Phaedo*, p. 485.

Chapter Three

[1]Alex Zwerdling, *Yeats and the Heroic Ideal* (New York: New York University Press, 1965), p. 108.

[2]James Olney, *The Rhizome and the Flower* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 264.

[3]Olney, *The Rhizome and the Flower*, p. 264.

[4]Olney, *The Rhizome and the Flower*, pp. 264-65.

[5]Bloom, p. 449.

[6]Bloom, p. 451.

[7]Zwerdling, p. 65.

[8]Yeats, *Plays and Controversies* (London: MacMillan, 1923), p. 215. Quoted by Zwerdling, p. 65.

[9]Henn, p. 329.

[10]New Standard Encyclopedia, vol. 3 (Chicago: Standard Education Corporation, 1975), p. C-639. It is certainly fitting that the expression "the curse of Cromwell on you" is a "classic Irish imprecation and oath." See D. M. R. Esson, *The Curse of Cromwell: A History of the Ironside Conquest of Ireland, 1649-53* (London: Leo Cooper, 1971), p. 195.

[11]Zwerdling, p. 64.

[12]Yeats, in his note after the title of "Three Songs to the Same Tune" (C, 415).

[13]Edward Hayes, ed., *The Ballads of Ireland* (Boston: Patrick Donahoe, 1859), Vol. 1, p. 13.

[14]Hayes, pp. 22-23.

[15]Yeats, *Pages from a Diary Written in Nineteen Hundred and Thirty* (Dublin: The Cuala Press, 1944), p. 55. Quoted by Zwerdling, p. 100.

[16]Yeats, "Easter 1916" (VP, 394).

[17]Bloom, p. 466.

[18]F. A. C. Wilson, *W. B. Yeats and Tradition* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1958), pp. 223-24.

[19]Wilson, p. 229, who in footnote 120 refers the reader to *Morte d'Arthur*, Book VII.

[20]Wilson, p. 227.

[21]Virginia Moore, *The Unicorn* (New York: MacMillan, 1954), p. 439.

[22]Jon Stallworthy, *Between the Lines: Yeats's Poetry in the Making* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 227. Quoted by Bloom, p. 466.

[23]W. J. Keith, "Yeats's Arthurian Black Tower," *MLN*, 75 (1960), 121.

[24]Wilson, p. 227.

[25]Moore, p. 439.

[26]Henn, p. 339.

[27]Bloom, p. 466.

[28]Henn, p. 251 and Wilson, p. 228.

[29]Yeats, in his note after "Three Songs to the Same Tune" (C, 415).

[30]Yeats, in his note after "Three Songs to the Same Tune" (C, 414).

[31]Yeats, in his note after "Three Songs to the Same Tune" (C, 414).

[32]Yeats, for example, wrongly named certain people as being involved in the Casement scandal. See L-DW, 120-22.

[33]This stanza begins a 1936 letter to Dorothy Wellesley in which he apologizes for wrongly implicating certain people in the Casement scandal. See L-DW, 121. See also "The Spur" (VP, 591).

[34]"Preface to the First Edition," Nation Office 1845, in *The Spirit of the Nation, or Ballads and Songs by the Writers of "The Nation,"* New Edition (Dublin: James Duffy and Co. Ltd., 1911), p. xx.

[35]According to Zimmermann, internal correspondences are assonances occurring within a line, as in "If Bonaparte be *taken*, the prophecy's mis*taken* . . ." (S, 105).

[36]This ballad opening, for example, is not dissimilar to that of an old ballad included in Daniel O'Keefe's Collection. See "Donnelly and Cooper," anon., in Daniel O'Keefe, ed., *The First Book of Irish Ballads*, 4th ed. (1965; rev. ed., Ireland: The Mercer Press, 1968), p. 23.

[37]According to Zimmermann in S, 100, such omissions are often a feature of ballad language in Ireland when that language aimed to imitate Gaelic. (Omission of "that" is also, of course, a fixture of colloquial English.)

[38]Henn, p. 329.

[39]Henn, p. 329.

[40]Henn, p. 330.

[41]Hodgart, *The Ballads*, p. 166, footnote 3.

[42]"The Twa Sisters" in *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, p. 19.

[43]Yeats, in his lecture "Contemporary Irish Literature" in *Yeats and the Theatre*, pp. 43-44.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Primary

Yeats, W. B. *Autobiographies*. London: MacMillan, 1966.

_____. *Essays and Introductions*. London: MacMillan, 1961.

_____. *Explorations*. London: MacMillan, 1962.

_____. *John Sherman & Dhoya*. Ed. Richard J. Finneran. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1969.

_____. *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*. Ed. Allan Wade. London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1954.

_____. *Letters on Poetry from W. B. Yeats to Dorothy Wellesley*. Ed. Dorothy Wellesley. London: Oxford University Press, 1940.

_____. *Mythologies*. London: MacMillan, 1959.

_____. *Plays and Controversies*. London: MacMillan, 1923.

_____. *Pages from a Diary Written in Nineteen Hundred and Thirty*. Dublin: The Cuala Press, 1944.

_____. *The Tables of the Law*. In Robert O'Driscoll, "*The Tables of the Law*: A Critical Text." In *Yeats Studies*, 1. Ireland: Irish University Press, 1971.

_____. *Uncollected Prose*. Ed., Vol. 1, John P. Frayne. London: MacMillan, 1970.

_____. *The Variorum Edition of the Plays of W. B. Yeats*. Ed. Russell K. Alspach. London: MacMillan, 1966.

_____. *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*. Eds. Peter Allt and Russell K. Alspach. London: MacMillan, 1966.

_____. *A Vision*. 1937; rev. ed., 1962; rpt. London: MacMillan, 1978.

_____. In Joseph Ronsley, "Yeats's Lecture Notes for 'Friends of My Youth.'" In *Yeats and the Theatre*. Eds. Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds. Canada: MacMillan Company of Canada Limited; U.S.A.: MacLean-Hunter Press, 1975.

II. Secondary

1. Books

Bloom, Harold. *Yeats*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. 2nd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.

Cuddon, J. A. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*. 1977; rev. ed., London: Andre Deutsch, 1979.

Dante. *The Divine Comedy*. Trans. Francis Cary. London: Ebeling Publishing, 1982.

Ellmann, Richard. *The Identity of Yeats*. London: MacMillan, 1954.

_____. *Yeats: The Man and the Masks*. 1948; rpt. New York: W. W. Norton, 1978, 1979.

Esson, D. M. R. *The Curse of Cromwell: A History of the Ironside Conquest of Ireland, 1649-53*. London: Leo Cooper, 1971.

Flannery, Mary Catherine. *Yeats and Magic: The Earlier Works*. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1977.

Friedman, Albert P. *The Ballad Revival: Studies in the Influence of Popular on Sophisticated Poetry*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.

Frye, Northrop. *Fables of Identity: Studies in Poetic Mythology*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963.

Gerould, Gordon Hall. *The Ballad of Tradition*. 1957; rpt. New York: Gordian Press, 1974.

Gummere, Francis B. *The Popular Ballad*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1907.

Hall, James and Martin Steinmann. *The Permanence of Yeats: Selected Criticism*. New York: MacMillan, 1950.

Harper, George Mills. *Yeats and the Occult*. Canada: MacMillan, 1975.

Hayes, Edward, ed. *The Ballads of Ireland*. Vol. I. Boston: Patrick Donahoe, 1859.

Henn, T. R. *The Lonely Tower: Studies in the Poetry of W. B. Yeats*. 2nd rev. ed., London: Methuen and Co., 1965.

Hodgart, M. J. C. *The Ballads.* 2nd ed., 1950; rpt. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1962.

Hodgart, Matthew, ed. *The Faber Book of Ballads.* 2nd ed.; London: Faber & Faber, 1965.

Housman, A. E. *A Shropshire Lad.* London: Richards Press, 1930.

Jeffares, A. Norman. *A Commentary on the Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats.* London: MacMillan, 1968.

Jeffares, A. Norman and K. G. W. Cross. *In Excited Reverie: A Centenary Tribute to William Butler Yeats.* London: MacMillan; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965.

Jobes, Gertrude. *Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols.* New York: The Scarecrow Press, 1961.

MacNeice, Louis. *The Poetry of W. B. Yeats.* London: Oxford University Press, 1941.

Meir, Colin. *The Ballads and Songs of W. B. Yeats: The Anglo-Irish Heritage in Subject and Style.* London: MacMillan, 1974.

Moore, Virginia. *The Unicorn.* New York: MacMillan, 1954.

Neuman, Shirley. *Some One Myth: Yeats's Autobiographical Prose.* Mountrath, Portlaoise: The Dolmen Press, 1982.

New Standard Encyclopedia. Vol. III. Chicago: Standard Educational Corporation, 1975.

O'Driscoll, Robert. "Critical Introduction to Yeats on Personality: Three Unpublished Lectures." In *Yeats and the Theatre.* Eds., Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds, Yeats Studies Series. Canada: MacMillan Company of Canada, Limited; U.S.A.: MacLean-Hunter Press, 1975.

_____. *Symbolism and Some Implications of the Symbolic Approach: W. B. Yeats during the Eighteen-Nineties.* Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1975.

O'Keefe, Daniel, ed. *The First Book of Irish Ballads.* 1927; rev. ed., Ireland: The Mercier Press, 1968.

Olney, James. *The Rhizome and the Flower.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

Plato. *Phaedo.* In *Great Dialogues of Plato.* Eds. Eric H. Warmington and Philip G. Rouse. Trans. W. H. D. Rouse. New York: New American Library Inc., 1956.

Ross, Sir David. *Plato's Theory of Ideas.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951.

Sargent, Helen Child, and George Lyman Kittredge, eds. *English and Scottish Popular Ballads: Edition from the Collection of Francis James Child.* Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1904.

Seward, Barbara. *The Symbolic Rose.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1960.

Spirit of the Nation or, Ballads and Songs by the Writers of "The Nation." Preface to 1st ed. New ed. Dublin: James Duffy & Co. Ltd., 1911.

Stallworthy, Jon. *Between the Lines: Yeats's Poetry in the Making.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963.

Sultan, Stanley. *Yeats at His Last.* Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1975.

Tennyson, Alfred Lord: "The Hesperides." Eds. Lionel Trilling and Harold Bloom. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Whitaker, Thomas R. *Swan and Shadow: Yeats's Dialogue with History.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1964.

Wilson, F.A.C. *Yeats Iconography.* London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1960.

Zimmermann, Georges-Denis. *Songs of Irish Rebellion: Political Street Ballads and Rebel Songs.* Hatboro: Folklore Associates, Inc., 1960.

Zwerdling, Alex. *Yeats and the Heroic Ideal.* New York: New York University Press, 1969.

2. Articles

Keith, W.J. "Yeats's Arthurian Black Tower." *MLN,* 75 (1960), 119-23.

Natterstad, J.H. "Yeats' 'The Cap and Bells.'" *Explicator,* 25 (1967), item 75.

Olney, James. "The Esoteric Flower: Yeats and Jung." In *Yeats and the Occult.* Ed. George Mills Harper, Yeats Studies Series. Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1975, pp. 27-54.

Pearce, Donald. "Philosophy and Phantasy: Notes on the Growth of Yeats's 'System.'" *UKCR*, 18 (1952), 169-80.

Raine, Kathleen. "Thomas Taylor in England." In *Thomas Taylor the Platonist: Selected Writings*. Eds. Kathleen Raine and George Mills Harper. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, pp. 3-48.

Taylor, Thomas. "Advertisement" to "A Dissertation on the Eleusian and Bacchic Mysteries." In *Thomas Taylor the Platonist: Selected Writings*. Eds. Kathleen Raine and George Mills Harper. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, p. 345.

_____. "Introduction" to "The Fable of Cupid and Psyche." In *Thomas Taylor the Platonist: Selected Writings*. Eds. Kathleen Raine and George Mills Harper. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, pp. 429-35.

Yeats, Michael. "W.B. Yeats and Irish Folk Song." *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, 30 (1966), 153-78.